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Signs: Is someone watching over us? p. 7

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AUG 28 2002



Matth Cupido holds an example of his artwork.

Valerie Walker

Three years ago during a worship service the seed of a painting took root in the imagination of Matth Cupido. He envisioned a painting that would explore the meaning of baptism and celebrate God's faithfulness expressed in that sacrament. What began as one painting became two, one of baptism and one of profession of faith.

Fundraising through sale of paintings

The paintings were crafted in Matth's closet studio and were copied to be given as gifts to candidates for baptism and profession of faith in Kentville Christian Reformed Church, Nova Scotia. Last fall Matth became aware of the growing funding crisis of Christian Reformed ministries. A denomination wide letter from Rev. Peter Borgdorff, the Christian Reformed Church's executive director of ministries, urging faithfulness in ministry support convinced Matth that the paintings should be reproduced for sale and the proceeds should go to CRC ministry share.

By May Matth had three more paintings in progress. They contemplate three other significant events in the life of a believer: the calling and commissioning of a believer into intentional service, marriage, and death. Matth is not sure how much money will be provided to CRC ministry share through the sale of the reproductions, but he hopes that the paintings themselves will benefit church members' understanding of life in Christ and the ministry that flows from it.

The link between the paintings and the ministry of the church is not a stretch in Matth's mind. At the heart of ministry is a God-ordained, Spirit-nurtured affection for people both inside and outside the embrace of the CRC. Seen through the eyes of faith, Matth says, ministry is a joyful response to the ultimate expression

of God's love for us. Central to Matth's understanding of ministry is an understanding of "common grace," the manifestation of God's love and mercy experienced by and through believers and unbelievers alike.

'I Spy' for spiritual symbolism

Words from the book of Revelation have become important to Matth in both the conception of this project and the development of the paintings. In particular he is drawn by Revelation 22:2, "And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations" — John's vision of the tree of life. The connectedness of leaves to the tree feeds Matth's interest in our corpo-

rate life in Christ, bound together, interdependent and dependent.

The paintings are a kind of "I Spy" for spiritual symbolism. The space around the subject of each painting is as rich as the subject itself. In response to the observation that the paintings provide an education in Reformed theology, Matth agrees and embarks on a lecture that could rightly be called "The Problem According to Matth." This is a well-worn speech, passionate and prickly, about the loss of understanding and knowledge of the Reformed faith within the CRC.

A loss of identity

Matth is concerned about our denomination's "self-knowledge."

We live out a specific faith in the worldwide church, he points out, and he's convinced that it is a difficult but essential task to maintain the integrity of our own beliefs in that arena.

"As the CRC becomes more liberal in its appraisal of its doctrine, the core of its belief, it becomes less capable of describing and recognizing the uniqueness of our faith," Matth says. More importantly, he asserts, "We get so

bound up and congested with our own agenda that we have no serious room for our life as a child of God."

The cost of this loss of identity, in Matth's opinion, is manifested in the way that we minister to one another in Christ's name — or fail to. It results in a diminishing of our godly affection for one another and for the world. Matth speculates that is because we are so busy and

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Christians in Pakistan attacked by militants, ten dead

Harry der Nederlanden

(With files from the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, ANS, the *National Post*, ENI, and EP)

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Christians in Pakistan are living in fear and feeling powerless after two deadly attacks that killed 10 and wounded at least two dozen more. Within four days Islamic militants attacked first a Christian school for missionary children and then a Christian hospital, both near Islamabad.

"We don't feel secure in Pakistan. Not only the Christians in Murree but Christians all over the country feel the same," said Seed Javed, a Presbyterian pastor in the town.

Six people were killed, including two Christian staff, and three people were injured on August 5 when gunmen attacked the school at Murree, 40 kilometres north-east of the capital Islamabad.

Javed said he lost both his adopted son Babar Pervaz, the school's office manager, and his nephew Javed Masih, a cook at the school, in the shooting.

"For me this is a personal tragedy I can never forget," he told ENI by telephone from Murree.

The other four people killed in

the shoot-out were all Muslims — two security guards, a school carpenter and a passer-by.

Four days later three men attacked nurses at a missionary hospital, lobbing hand grenades at them as they were leaving morning services at a chapel. At least 4 nurses were killed and another 20 injured. One of the assailants was also killed, apparently by shrapnel from his own bomb.

School stormed by gunmen

The school was stormed by four masked gunmen firing Kalashnikov assault rifles, according to the *Washington Post*. Although it is a school for missionary children, all of the victims were Pakistanis, one a security guard and another a passer-by. None of the 150 children or the teachers were hurt.

The gunmen first killed a security guard outside the compound and a passer-by and then stormed the gates, shooting and killing a second guard and a receptionist and blasting out the windows of a dormitory. Another security guard returned fire, forcing the attackers to race across the school grounds, hop over a back fence and

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News

Ambon peace process intact — barely

Alex Buchan

LONDON (Compass) — Ambon's precarious peace between Muslims and Christians continued to hold despite extremists detonating two bombs outside a supermarket in the predominantly Christian area of Mardika on Ambon Island on July 27. Fifty-two people were injured, and one has since died.

Quelling a violent reaction

"We worked hard to quell any violent reaction to this awful bombing, and on the whole, the Christians have chosen not to be provoked," said an Ambonese pastor. A report released by the Masariku human rights network said that strides had been made in intermingling Christian and Muslim communities again, though progress was slow.

According to eyewitnesses, two young men left the homemade devices in plastic bags and detonated them by remote at 11:10 a.m. on the morning of Saturday, July 27. Another homemade bomb in the Christian area of Gudang Arang was neutralized shortly afterwards.

The blast area included a polytechnic school and many of the injured were students. Of the 52



Violence looms in Ambon, Indonesia.

taken to the hospital, six remain seriously injured and one is dead.

Precarious peace process

The precarious peace process had already been tested earlier in the month with the flaring of violence in Halmahera, the largest island in eastern Indonesia's northern Maluku island chain. On July 11, a large force of Muslim fighters attacked the Christian village of Gorua, in the Tobelo region. Other villages were also attacked, with soldiers from the Brawijaya 512 unit failing to inter-

vene. However, the Muslim fighters were not thought to be from Laskar Jihad but local Muslims from nearby Ternate.

"We think these Muslims recently returned from refugee camps, where they have sat fuming for two years," a local source said. "Unfortunately they have returned well armed, and we can expect more of this kind of revenge violence as more and more refugees begin to return to the area."

Stung by accusations that it has failed to be even-handed, the government has sought to implement

the peace process by disarming militias on both sides. After failing to arrest Laskar Jihad leader Umar Thalib in April, authorities arrested seven Saudi Arabians flying into Ambon on July 24. The seven were sent back because they did not have a letter of invitation from the governor. Many Christians suspect that Saudi money fuels the extremist Muslim armies still roaming the islands.

Yet the peace process is holding. The Catholic Ambon Crisis Center released a report by Jacky Manuputy of the Masariku human rights network on July 26. The report concluded that "there is a gradual increase of mutual understanding and intermingling of the Muslim and Christian communities." He also pointed to an increase in the number of safe roads throughout Ambon as a further indication of progress.

Many refugees stuck in camps

It was not all good news, however. The report said far too many refugees are still stuck in camps, and on the island of Ceram there are still thousands hiding in the jungle, far from any humanitarian aid. Gambling and prostitution has

greatly increased in the wake of the warfare, to say nothing of the piles of rotting garbage that now infest the islands, which used to be known as "Ambon Manisec" (sweet Ambon).

Meanwhile on the national stage, Christians are carefully watching the deliberations of the annual session of the People's Consultative Committee (MPR). The vice president, Mr. Hamzah Haz, told journalists on July 28 that his United Development Party (PPP) would be pressing for an amendment to the 1945 constitution to require all Indonesian Muslims to observe sharia (Islamic law).

Hamzah Haz is the chairman of the PPP, one of the main Muslim parties, which has long pressed for this amendment. Still, many observers were taken aback at his statement, believing that the price of him becoming vice president a year ago was to refrain from bringing up this topic. He did pledge, however, to seek the change through political means. Christians fear that if sharia is made compulsory, they will become second class citizens.

Politically there is little chance
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Pakistani Christians grateful children weren't killed

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disappear into the woods.

On their way out, the gunmen shot dead the cook and the carpenter, who was hiding near the opposite end of the grounds from where the attack began.

David Wood, a teacher from Scotland, told the *New York Times* that it was a miracle the men didn't hurt the children in any way during the 15-minute assault. Other witnesses and school staff told reporters that they quickly scrambled into the nearest buildings and locked the doors. The staff and students had been preparing for just such an attack on their school since extremist groups started attacking Christian and Western targets since Sept. 11, 2001. Doors and walls in the school had also been reinforced in recent months to provide extra security — security that proved worthwhile on Aug. 5.

The Murree Christian School, ENI reports, is a boarding school in the Himalayan foothills established in 1956. It provides Western education principally for the children of people serving Pakistan in Christian missions services across the country. The school has an enrollment of 150 students from kindergarten through grade 12, with some 35 teaching and boarding care staff from western countries.

Up until the deadly shootings, the school enjoyed warm support from the local community.

The school's principal, Russell Morton said, "It is a matter of praise to God that the gunmen walked past both the high school and the elementary school, focusing their attack instead on the boarding hostel in which there were very few students at the time."

Government condemned violent attack

Governmental officials have condemned the violent attack as an act of terrorism. Army and police personnel have secured the area around the school. The Army has provided additional security and a few families living in less secure areas of Murree have moved on to the campus.

The school cancelled classes, initially for 24 hours, and set up counseling teams for students, national staff and expatriate staff.

Witnesses to the attack on the hospital, the BBC reported, heard two explosions. Dr. Ashchenaz Lall, the director of the hospital, said, "We had just finished the service and were just coming out of the church" when the attack took place. He said that the attackers entered the compound, "and went

towards the church and threw two grenades, which went off. There were ladies in front, so most of the ladies got hurt."

Other witnesses said one of the three attackers held off the hospital's lone security guard while the other two hurled homemade bombs at dozens of nurses. Many of the approximately 100 doctors and nurses at the early morning chapel service were not yet outside when the assault took place. The explosions were so powerful, according to a report in the *New York Times*, that they carved two-foot-deep craters in the brick walkway and shattered windows all around.

The hospital ministers mostly to Muslims, as Christians make up only about 2 per cent of Pakistan's population, 97 per cent of which is Muslim. Throughout the morning, said the *Times*, local Muslims came to console the wounded Christians.

Government officials said they were hunting a small cell of about 15 radicals whom are thought to be responsible for both attacks. No one, however, has claimed responsibility. A day after the attack on the missionary school, police say, the three attackers blew themselves up with hand grenades about 40 km north of the school.

Leaders of organizations serving and using the Murree

School and the hospital asked for prayer from the worldwide Christian community. "This latest attack on Christians in Pakistan is further indication of the volatility of this nation and extremists' response to faiths other than Islam," said Terry Madison, president of Open Doors USA. "Understandably, Christians in Pakistan are nervous and concerned. This most recent attack should be a motivator for all Christians in America to pray for our beleaguered brothers and sisters in Pakistan."

Attacks since Sept. 11

There have been at least two other major attacks on Christian minorities since Pakistan sided with the United States in the war on terrorism after last Sept. 11. In March a grenade attack killed five people at a Protestant church in Islamabad where many foreign nationals worshipped.

On Oct. 28, 2001, Christians were massacred in Behawalpur when gunmen entered St. Dominic's Catholic Church and fired into the sanctuary, killing the pastor and 15 members of the congregation. Four men were arrested on July 23 on charges that they participated in the attack — the worst against Christians in Pakistan's history. However, all four suspects

were killed when the police truck that was transporting them came under fire. Police claimed to have shot and killed all four men as they tried to escape, as well as two of the attackers.

Victor Azariah, the council's general secretary, said: "We cannot see this in isolation from the earlier attacks."

"Christians are being identified as part of the western nations," Azariah told ENI, speaking from his office in Lahore.

Police had found a letter at the site of the school shooting claiming the attack was in reaction to western "brutalities against Muslims in the world," he said.

Islamic terrorist groups "were taking revenge on Pakistani Christians" for United States' foreign policy in the Middle East and attacks made on Afghanistan in the wake of the September 11 terror strikes in the U.S., he added.

Pakistan's Christian community does not dare mount protest demonstrations against such attacks and has to put up with such attacks "in patience".

Christian street protests, he said, "would only aggravate the situation for us as the government itself is helpless to deal with the powerful Islamic fundamentalists here".

News

Wycliffe aims to start 3,000 Bible translation projects by 2025

Alan Doerksen

CALGARY, Alta. — Although Wycliffe Bible Translators and other translators have been working diligently for decades to produce Bibles in many languages, 3,000 people groups in the world still don't have the Bible in their own heart language. Therefore, Wycliffe sees an urgent need to start many more translations, and is operating an ambitious plan called Vision 2025, which aims to have work started on translations in all remaining languages by the year 2025.

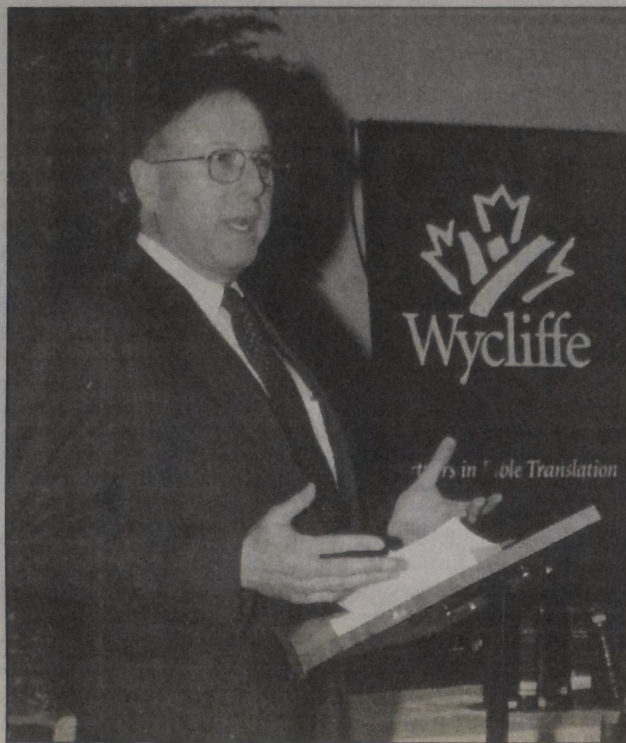
"At the current rate of Scripture translation, it could take another 150 years to provide all the Bible-less people groups with God's Word," explains Wycliffe Canada on its website. "It's time to change the pace. They've waited long enough!"

If Wycliffe continued at its current rate of translation, "the rationale is that five generations of people will have passed by" before they get their own Bible translation, asserts Roger Gilstrap, executive director of Wycliffe Canada. "That's the urgency."

'No' to status quo

Vision 2025 was first given expression at an international Wycliffe conference held in May 1999, explains Gilstrap. John Waters, the agency's international executive director, is the man behind the vision. He states on Wycliffe's website: "Vision 2025... is an attitude that says, 'We are ready to be servants in His hands to serve the nations of the world with His Word. We are ready to change in whatever way He wants us to change....'"

According to Wycliffe, "Vision 2025 is a bold call to action and commitment; a firm 'no' to the status quo; it's thinking 'outside the box' and a willingness to take risks."



Roger Gilstrap, executive director of Wycliffe Canada, explains the urgency of speeding up the process of Bible translation.

Several key aspects of Vision 2025 are:

- Partnerships: Working in unity with other organizations to jointly do the job;
- Training: Equipping Wycliffe's staff with the skills to equip others;
- Urgency: Getting the task done more quickly than the status quo will permit;
- Vision-sharing: Motivating God's Church everywhere — at home and in field countries — to further Bible translation.
- Sustainability: Establishing translation projects that continue beyond Wycliffe's involvement.

The 3,000 language groups with

no Bible translation represent more than 250 million people, reports Wycliffe Canada. "A large proportion of the language groups needing Bible translation are located in the spiritually needy countries of the 10/40 Window, where the Gospel is often resisted and restricted for political, religious and cultural reasons. This area contains two-thirds of the world's population, most of the least-evangelized nations, the largest concentration of Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists, and a majority of the world's poor."

For such people, explains Wycliffe,

- Church planters can't effec-

tively share the Gospel and disciple new Christians without God's Word.

- Christian radio can't beam Scripture into remote areas unless it has been translated.

- Evangelism, training, and worship ministries are hampered unless people have a Bible they can really understand.

Working in new ways

To reach its goal, Wycliffe is preparing to work in new ways from before. One is to work more with other agencies such as the International Bible Society, Gilstrap tells *Christian Courier*. "This is far bigger than one organization."

Besides its work with the Bible Society, Wycliffe also has partnerships with local agencies in other countries, for which Wycliffe helps with funds and infrastructure. "We want local people to take leadership" in translation work, asserts Gilstrap.

Another new focus of Wycliffe designed to speed up the translation process is by training and empowering nationals to do more of the translation work into their own native languages. Wycliffe is working to "pass on technology and training to nationals, who can carry on the work," says Gilstrap. "It's a co-operative effort — it's working together in partnership.... We know that financial resources will still depend largely on the West." But Westerners should do more than only provide money, he suggested.

Canadian Christians concerned about people without their own Bible translation, and who want to help out, can contact Wycliffe through its website (www.wycliffe.ca) suggests Gilstrap. Wycliffe encourages people with a variety of technical and practical skills to become involved with Vision 2025.

Ambon Christians struggle on

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of the amendment being adopted by the MPR. Most of the other major political parties, including the ruling Indonesia Democracy Party, the Golkar Party, and many Muslim groups, are opposed to changes.

Yet Indonesia's 20 million or so Christians, who on the whole have enjoyed greater freedom since the fall of Suharto in 1998, still have to deal with ambiguities in the religious freedom laws. According to a news report from the Bloomberg news agency, four house churches in the Bekasi district of West Java were closed by police after Muslim extremists complained they were illegal gatherings.

Jauhari Mubarak, spokesman for the Front for the Defenders of Islam, who pressed the police to

make the closures, said, "People there don't agree with their existence. They [the Christians] created social unrest because they conduct Christian activities in the middle of a Muslim community."

The law of Indonesia has not been altered from the time of Suharto. Christians are required to gain the permission of the neighborhood in order to start a church meeting. In practice, many Christian fellowships just go ahead and meet, realizing that if their existence is put to a vote, they will rarely receive permission.

"This ambiguity needs to be resolved," said a local pastor involved in the dispute. "Our position is more precarious than ever and for the sake of all Christians in Indonesia, this should be addressed."

Churches forced to move regional peace conference in Indonesia

Frauke Brauns

BIELEFELD, Germany, (ENI) — A conference aimed at promoting regional peace, organized by the United Evangelical Mission, was forced to move to another location on the island of Java after it received threats from Muslim extremists, says a UEM spokesperson in Germany.

The conference, with the theme "Overcoming violence and promoting a culture of peace", was scheduled to have met in Solo August 2 to 8, but was forced to move to Yogyakarta, 100 kilometres

from its original location in central Java, Indonesia's most heavily populated island.

"We do not really know why this happened," Ute Dilg, spokesperson of UEM based in Wuppertal, Germany, told ENI. She noted that there was a campaign in a local newspaper which accused Christian churches of having taken part in massacres in Ambon, Poso on the Moluccan islands in eastern Indonesia, an area where there is an almost equal number of Christians and Muslims.

"But," said Dilg, "there are no

UEM member churches there."

Some 88 per cent of Indonesia's 225 million people are generally described as being followers of Islam, while about eight per cent are Christians.

Extremist groups hounded people

Church members said extremist Muslim groups like Jumdullah and Hizbollah hounded people at the hotel in Solo where the conference was to be held.

The UEM then held talks with 10 other Islamic organizations,

ascertaining that they did not feel threatened by the Christian-sponsored conference. Those organizations nevertheless advised the Christians to move the conference out of Solo to a safer place.

Moving the conference had delayed its start to Saturday August 3 and it was to adjourn on Thursday August 8 as planned.

A total of 107 delegates from UEM member churches in Asia, observers and guests as well as employees of the local churches and of UEM are discussing their work in Asia.

Such conferences are held regularly in each UEM region and delegates decide on activities and policy in the region. Regional conferences meet in between plenary assemblies which meet every four years.

Prior to the peace conference, gatherings for women and for youth have been held in Solo without any interference from extremists.

The UEM is an association of 34 Christian churches from Asia, Africa and Germany which co-ordinates missionary activities.

Editorial

On throwing out old boxes and the history of the world

Harry der Nederlanden

While translating A. A. van Ruler's depiction of churchgoing as in many ways the vehicle that carries through time those great gifts that sustain our humanity, such as truth, goodness, love, community — in fact, everything that makes life worthwhile — I was suddenly brought up short by my own — what shall I call it — thoughtless cynicism? in this regard.

Bert Witvoet, CC's longtime editor, dropped in to see the new office the other day. He had just come home from a few weeks vacation in the Maritimes and had read my remarks about having to throw out boxes full of old files. He was upset. My words about taking many years of accumulated papers and letters to recycling went straight to his gut.

Hadn't it entered my mind that he might want to sort through those files to save some, he asked me. No, it hadn't entered my mind at all. I'd spent time browsing through them, marveling at the commitment and work they represented, but I hadn't seen much point in saving them. But some of it, Bert insisted, would surely have been of interest to the CRC archivist at Calvin College. I had to confess that hadn't dawned on me either.

Bursting with old files

A couple of weeks ago, we were in the middle of moving, and the large loft of our former offices was

stacked with boxes upon dusty boxes bursting with old files. They hadn't been sorted for years. By the time I'd carried a number of those boxes to the edge of the loft, slid them down a makeshift ramp, piled them up once again, and then packed them into my van to haul them to recycling, they were just tons of trash paper to me, tons of paper that I'd had to lift several times. When I weighed in at the recycling facility the first time, I had more than 1,300 pounds of paper in my van, and that was just the first of several trips we made there. To me all that old paper was just a huge weight on my shoulders that I had to get rid of.

That's how many of our contemporaries experience history and tradition — as so much dead weight bearing us down. I thought my own attitude was very different, more in tune with what Van Ruler wrote, trying to swim against the tide of late modernity. But our professed beliefs don't always penetrate into our attitudes and behavior. The Bible, I think, leads us to believe that the efforts of believers to be faithful to God's calling to dedicate all our works to manifest the kingship of Jesus Christ, although trivial and amateur by worldly standards, make up the actual mainstream of history in God's eyes. *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *The Globe and Mail*, the *CBC*, *Reuters* — these are the news media that matter, that garner respect in this society. They closely follow the doings of heads of state like Bush, Chrétien, Sharon, Arafat, Hussein, who impact world events.

Small potatoes?

We Kuyperians believe Christians should be active on the big stages, too, seeking to influence the world drama being played out there with the gospel, and we also believe that the Word of God gives us a unique perspective from which to interpret those events. Yet, what we produce, not just in CC but in many other Christian publications as well, strikes us as feeble and marginal. Small potatoes. CC is not where the action's at. And this sense of operating, if not in a ghetto, then in a backwater is, I think, common to all Christian newspapers. The big public discussions in which everyone participates, be they about politics, economics or culture, simply are not conducted there.

We honestly don't matter that much — at least not to those outside 'our' circles. This is the mentality that permitted me to dump boxes of old letters without giving them a lot of serious thought. The idea that some future historian would be interested in the minutiae and the behind-the-scenes mechanics of CC seemed to me slightly ludicrous. I pride myself on being a realist, and to entertain the idea that some time in the future others will see my efforts as worthy enough of historical examination to make the papers in my filing cabinet worth saving makes me chuckle. But is that really being realistic?

Van Ruler draws our gaze away from Washington and Ottawa, away from Israel and Palestine, away from Saudi Arabia and Iraq to that marginal act we do every Sunday morning without giving it much thought, like putting on your pants and brushing your teeth — going to church with your family. This, he suggests, is the real place where history is made. This is where the rubber hits the road, where the oil of the new world order enters the pipeline. If I asserted that on *Nightline*, I'd be taken for a crackpot. CSIS would probably open a file with my name on it.

Yet, isn't Van Ruler right? On the basis of Scripture,

Christian thinkers hold up for us a vision of a new humanity rooted not in some grand vision of a new world order, whether socialistic, communitarian or liberal democratic, but in the faith and belief passed on through the preaching, teaching, communion and shared ministry of the church. That's the motor of history. Not because we Christians are the secret heirs of some occult power, not because we are endowed with some superior wisdom like aliens from some more advanced civilization, but because God ordained that his kingdom would come not through the bluster of powerful politicians, not through the threat of weapons of mass destruction, not through the cash infusions of the almighty market, but through the faith of children, through the foolishness of the weak, through the suffering of those without a huge stock portfolio, without a five-figure severance package and without a retirement account bigger than heaven.

I must admit, though, that if I were an historian, a Christian historian, I still wouldn't lust after the archives of CC or even of Calvin College and the CRC. In the 15th century, the theological writings of Luther and Calvin transformed the face of the West (which has in turn altered, some would say disfigured, the face of the earth). That is no longer true. The writings of pastors and theologians no longer make that kind of public and international impact, and that impact is no greater when the leaders of all Christian denominations put their heads together to speak with one voice. I've been impressed by the ministry of Pope John Paul II, but the Pope no longer strikes the fear of God into the hearts of the mighty.

The eyes of faith

Yet, we Christians, especially we Kuyperians, but also the World Council of Churches and the liberation theology types, have our eyes on the council tables of the mighty and the board rooms of the rich. We want to see, with our own eyes, the power of the Kingdom of God in the great affairs of mankind. But it's harder to see than the footprints of Buzz Aldrin on the moon. That's why Paul speaks of "the eyes of faith."

These earthly eyes still see darkly, as through beer-bottle glass. As a result, editors and columnists of Christian newspapers for the most part still follow the lead of the big boys at *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The Globe and Mail*, and so on. We comment on what they bring to our attention, we write on topics and themes featured in the secular media, we review mostly films made by the big studios. Only in our reviews of a certain minor category of books called religious or theological do we offer something unique, and more and more Christians prefer to read about the ones that make it on the bestseller lists. We want desperately to join in the main discussion. Yet, if we bring our own Christian vocabulary into that discussion, we precipitate an embarrassed silence or a roll of the eyes.

And we begin to internalize that assessment of us. That's not entirely wrong. Paul did just that when he accepted the appellation 'fools'. Although with the eyes of faith we may get glimpses of the underlying truth of history, these are no more than glimpses, often skewed a little by our own personal follies as well. But in the final analysis, making history is not even the domain of the church or of Christians individually or corporately but of the Spirit of God. And that Spirit blows where he wills — even in places where there is no church.

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Letters/News

Hielema's style devoid of Christian hope and realism

Re; Bert Hielema's comments in CC of July 29th: He admits that "We all grope in the dark...nobody is an expert anymore." But then he proceeds to scatter his own views as if he were an exception to that rule. His opinions tossed off in the course of a one-page article include the following:

The U.S. is blind to the problems we face; got elected and became rich by deception. Hielema writes: "no politician was better qualified to discuss foul business dealings, and no person was less qualified to be convincing."

Hielema ridicules Bush's forthright leadership on combating terrorism. He is convinced that the policies of the current U.S. government favors the rich and are bound to fail. He predicts that we are facing a future of financial collapse. Where to go for help and wisdom to avoid the kind of ominous future

that awaits us all, according to Hielema? Wait.

Hielema has found someone who apparently does not grope in the dark and one who is cocksure of his own expertise. He is no one less than the famous John Kenneth Galbraith, the man who has spent a long life proclaiming with great authority on all things that plague lesser mortals. Mr. Galbraith has filled numerous books in which he spelled out exactly what is wrong with the U.S. and particularly with the free market. He has not met a problem for which he did not have the cure: more government intervention.

Scattering their opinions with great abandon

I think I know why Hielema is attracted to Galbraith. Both have a habit of scattering their opinions with great abandon about

what ails the rest of us — though Galbraith is the better wordsmith. But I am expecting more than that from a person who writes for a Christian paper. It is easy to find fault with American politics and business. There is lots to criticize. But I object strongly to the sneering way in which Hielema dismisses President Bush. I think that his writing would be far more believable if he wrote with a bit more balance and reservation.

America-bashing is in, especially in this country and in Europe. I for one am convinced that the Americans deserve credit for what they did in WW II and the Cold War. We until this day are the beneficiaries of their sacrifices and generosity. I deeply appreciate that they are now prepared, as the only militarily strong power, to stand against those who want to destroy us. Who else is? The UN, where the thugs and dictators have the same vote as the democracies? Europe? Canada? Let's be honest.

Yes, fighting a war is a dirty business, but we, of all people who have known what it means to be under the heel of a godless power, should show some appreciation for the key role America is now playing in standing up to the enemies of the West — who are also the enemies of Christianity.

My most weighty objection to Hielema's style is that it is devoid of any Christian hope and realism. His columns are monotonously belaboring what is wrong, especially with the U.S. I can find plenty of such articles in the *Toronto Star*. I am convinced that it is more in keeping with the Christian faith to recognize that we yet live in a far more diverse world than the one depicted in Hielema's columns.

Not all is lost

Not all is lost; there are still many more than seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to the Baals of this age. When the people of Israel were torn from their homeland, they were yet instructed to pray for the peace of what was to them an alien city. Our circumstances are incomparably better than theirs. Should we do less?

So, criticize all you want. But do so with a sense of your/our own shortcomings, with gratitude about that which is still valuable in our culture — also, maybe especially, in the U.S. Above all, do so with a sense that the Good News has come to just such a world as this.

Harry Antonides
Mississauga, Ont.

German TV program to seek out the smartest cleric

Frauke Brauns

BIELEFELD, Germany (ENI) — Many people view clerics as smart people and think the place they display their knowledge is in the pulpit, but a German television station is giving them the chance to entertain on TV in imparting their wisdom.

TV station RTL is lining up pastors, priests, rabbis and imams in a show entitled "Germany's smartest clergyman."

In October, 24 of them will appear in the show and RTL is looking for representatives from many churches including Lutherans, Catholics, Baptists and Mennonites. At the same time the TV program is seeking to have an equal number of male and female contestants.

From Christian churches, 171 Protestant pastors and 77 Roman Catholic priests have applied to take part in the show.

Clerics as guys next door

"Clerics will appear as the guys next door displaying not only their shortcomings but also their strengths, their knowledge and humor," Fritz Penserot, liaison officer of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) for private TV-channels such as RTL, Sat. 1 and Phoenix told ENI.

Penserot and Dietmar Heeg, commissioner of the German Bishops' Conference (DBK) for RTL agreed that the TV program was a fine opportunity to present the churches in public.

For the show, RTL is adapting a format used by other programs such as "the smartest kids" which tallied nine million viewers and "the smartest teacher" which pulled in seven million. The search for contestants for "the smartest mayor" will start on September 14.

Still, the show has been criticized by some people as being trivial. Matthias Schreiber, spokesperson of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland, told the German Protestant news agency, epd, that the show "only pretends to look for well educated people."

But Fritz Penserot says the program focuses on the people appearing and not on knowledge. "Watching the show means watching people," he said. During the show, the viewer gets to know the personality of the candidates. "The clerics will present their churches in a fun, but intelligent show. This is the way churches should use the mass media: to show that church is more than just praying in a service on Sunday."

New appreciation for dandelions

Reading Anna Plesums' poem on dandelions gave me new appreciation for these bright decorators of my lawn. We do not spray them, and are amazed by their vigor.

Anna Plesums is right, God created dandelions before man was created.

Then, in Genesis 1:26, the Bible says: "Let us make man in our own image, in our likeness, and let them rule over..."

Then verse 29: "I give you every seed bearing plant... they will be yours for food... to all the beasts of the field, everything that

has the breath of life in it — I give every green plant for food."

Then Genesis 9:3: "Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything" (NIV).

We must love and care for God's creation, and we also may make use of all of it.

May the Lord bless you all.

George Rhebergen
Belleville, Ont.

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News/Environment

National museum recognizes MCCer's invention



MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

George Klassen at the Agricultural Technology at the Canada Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa with the rower pump he designed.

WINNIPEG, Man. (MCC Canada Release) — The design seems simple. But its impact on some people's lives in Bangladesh has been so profound that George Klassen's rower pump has been highlighted in a recently-opened museum exhibit.

Made and repaired locally

"It's simple, made locally, repaired locally, and inexpensive," says Franz Klingender with enthusiasm. Klingender, Curator of Agricultural Technology at the Canada Science and Technology Museum, says the importance of the innovation lies in its proven potential to drastically improve lives in developing countries.

"What struck me about the rower pump is that it's a technology that helps and is applicable to another part of the world. It helps them feed and support themselves," he notes. Although the exhibition is entitled "Innovation Canada," he says that even though

the technology was designed for another part of the world, the desire to help others represents a distinct part of Canadian culture.

Klassen worked with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Bangladesh as an agricultural engineer in the 1970s. In 1977 he was asked to design a better hand pump to increase irrigation potential.

Irrigation makes third crop possible

The pump features few parts, is manufactured locally, uses inexpensive materials, and is easily maintained without costly tools. At a cost of around \$15 for the pump, farmers can often recover their expenses in one season with the irrigation profits from half an acre. Although Bangladesh receives much rain between April and September, irrigation makes a third crop possible in the dry season. At least 40,000 pumps are currently in use.

Klassen, who lives in Carmen,

Man., calls the project the highlight of his career and is honored to be included in the exhibition. "It's an exceptional opportunity to see a project from beginning to end," he says.

More importantly, he says, "it's humbling to realize the number of people that can be directly benefited (by such technology)." His

work with MCC has shown him how desperately the world needs renewable resources. "We're sated with technology in North America. There's a lot that can be done in developing countries with a relatively small effort." Klingender agrees. He notes that often "when people in this part of the world create technology, they only benefit

themselves. This benefits another part of the world. It's a very appropriate technology."

The "Innovation Canada" exhibition opened at the Canada Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa, Ontario on July 1, 2002 and features more than 100 artifacts as well as interactive displays.

Celebrating species protection with SARA

In the run-up to the next "Earth Summit" the news out of Ottawa is encouraging. The Canadian government has taken an important step toward actively protecting endangered species. In early June, the House of Commons passed Bill C-5, the Species at Risk Act (SARA). Canada now joins the United States, Australia, and other countries in offering formal legal protection to species on federal lands. The simultaneous passage of the Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act brings focused protection to marine ecosystems. Together these two pieces of legislation give structure to Canadians' strong desire to maintain sensitive species. So now we can consider not only tithing the earth (setting aside important terrestrial ecosystems) but the sea as well.

A long road to legislation

It has been a long process getting here. It began a decade ago when Canada was the first industrial nation to sign the Rio Declaration on Environment and Sustainable Development. In that document we pledged ourselves to taking steps for the effective protection of biodiversity. But since 1992, as I have mentioned previously (CC November 15, 1999 and October 15, 2001), the federal government has not been able to pass comprehensive species protection legislation. Now, barring rejection by the Senate, endangered species protection will become law.

It is not that we have been doing nothing for endangered species in the past. Under existing international treaties and inter-provincial agreements (CITES and COSEWIC) the federal government has been co-operating to assess species at risk and prescribe recovery programs. The new legislation adds money and regulatory teeth to the process, and it is more comprehensive in scope. Still, as critics point out, the legislation is far from perfect. For instance, only six per cent of the Canadian land base is under federal jurisdiction. This leaves over two-thirds of the 402 listed species without strong protection. And so there remains much work to convince the various provincial governments, like Alberta, to pass SARA-type legislation.

Protecting a world class biological heritage

When it comes to biological wealth, few countries can match Canada. Our home has some of the richest ecosystems on the planet. Consider that in the world we have one-fifth of the wilderness, one-fifth of the fresh water, one quarter of all the wetlands, and one-tenth of the forests. And the

Creation waits...

John Wood



multiple demands placed on this heritage are growing. Our previous, more passive approach to conservation is not enough.

At the first Biodiversity Convention in Rio in 1992 we acknowledged a global responsibility to act carefully in the conservation of these rich gifts. But for over a decade we have been dragging our collective feet on this conservation promise. Habitat conservation, simply keeping a space for organisms to live, is a vital principle of conservation biology. What we began so well by setting aside more than nine per cent of our land base, we now need to complete. With these new laws, we should have the financial resources to secure some large remaining tracks for species that are sensitive to human disturbance.

Rio + 10 comes to South Africa

The stage is now set for the next "Earth Summit" in late August. This will be the largest gathering of its kind. More than 50,000 delegates from 100 countries will stream into Johannesburg, South Africa, for the meetings. The world is pinning its hope for a sustainable future on the ability of these leaders to find a way through an increasingly complex maze of choices. The five priority areas of discussion are water, sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity.

Praying for earthy wisdom

Seen through the eyes of biblical stewardship these topics have remarkable parallels to biblical priorities. Will these leaders be able to find tangible, equitable, and cost-effective solutions to these problems? Given the complexity and global scope of the problems, as well as the proclivity of humans for destructive behavior, the biblical story of reconciliation, renewal and hope is more valuable than ever. I wonder what faithful stewards will be present at the summit? Will the delegates hear the biblical principles of earthkeeping? I can't answer that right now, but I do encourage all of us to heed Paul's advice and to pray for these leaders of the world. May these leaders find wisdom and knowledge and with it bless us all — creatures everywhere.



John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College, Edmonton, Alberta.

IN THE AREA??

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Arts/Media

Signs: Is someone watching over us?

Starring: Mel Gibson, Joaquin Phoenix, Cherry Jones, Rory Culkin, Abigail Breslin. **Directed, produced, and written by:** M. Night Shyamalan. **Distributor:** Touchstone Pictures
Reviewed by Ron Vandenburg

Do the things in our lives happen merely by coincidence, or is there providence, someone looking after us? *Signs*, M. Night Shyamalan's 2002 thriller, struggles with this theme.

Signs features Mel Gibson in the part of Graham Hess, a former Episcopalian priest and family man who has lost his faith in God after the death of his wife. Continuing to mourn her death after six months and angry at God for allowing his wife to die, Graham (still referred to as "Father" by most in his Bucks County, Pennsylvania community) retreats in his farmhouse and raises his two children Morgan (Rory Culkin) and Bo (Abigail Breslin) along with the help of his younger brother Merrill (Joaquin Phoenix).

Marketed as B-movie

The movie posters and ads market the film in the vein of B-movie alien invasion genre. Surprisingly, the now-passé crop circles are the dominant image. In the 1970s, they were seen around the world, each time mysteriously appearing over-



YAHOO COM PHOTO

Graham Hess (played by Mel Gibson) retreats to his farmhouse to raise his two children, after his wife's death.

night. In 1991, several pranksters came forward to reveal how they had done it. Of course, since then crop circles have appeared with some still unexplained.

But the movie is not about aliens, flying saucers and invasions. The suspense is there, in the wind, in the windows, in the bumps and creaks and dog barks and in the silences. The crop circles only confirm to the characters that some-

thing doesn't feel right, that something is wrong. We wait to see if indeed the aliens are real. In fact, it doesn't matter if these aliens show up or not, because the story is not about them. *Signs* uses the circles as a way to introduce the story of a family struggling with the unsaid grief of an untimely death. The story is the characters: the ghost-like presence of the daughter, the protectiveness of the son, the obsession of the brother and the fear and lack of faith of the father. Like any good movie, the characters become more important than the plot.

Miracles or synchronicity

In fact, the signs referred to in the movie are those events that we might call miracles or synchronicity, when all things come together. For the grief-stricken father, there are only coincidences and luck. He places people in two camps: first, those who in the face of tragedy believe in God and therefore have hope and, second, those who believe that they are on their own and when faced with tragedy admit defeat.

Shyamalan the director has revealed that to him the scariest thing is not an alien invasion but that a good man could lose his faith in God. Throughout, we see Graham Hess hopelessly struggle alone at the farmhouse surrounded by the fields of corn, isolated from the rest of the town, the rest of the world and his rejected God. Painful to watch is the despair in his eyes as he rejects prayer at the family dinner table. "I will not waste another minute on prayer."

The scariest scene

In fact, the scariest scene in the entire movie is an asthma attack. In

Habits of the high-tech heart

Phil de Haan

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Forgive Calvin professor Quentin Schultze if he sounds anti-technology in his forthcoming book, *Habits of the High-Tech Heart*. He's not. But he is sounding a warning about society's fascination (he might even call it a fixation) with technology, especially when it comes to communication. His concerns are plain in the preface.

A personal journey

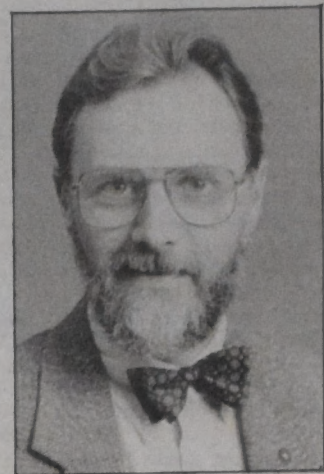
"This book is partly a personal journey," he says, "to find my way in an era when many human beings seem, like me, to have wandered off the trail that leads

to what Socrates called the 'good life.' I enjoy the Internet and other communication and informational technologies, but I must admit that they do not satisfy my need for moral coherence and spiritual direction. If anything, such machines seem to divert my attention from the central concerns of life, such as love, gratitude and responsibility, to relatively trivial pursuits with little redeeming value. Moreover, as I talk with colleagues, students, relatives and neighbors, I find that they generally feel a similar tyranny of the informationally urgent. My own uneasiness about the information age seems to reflect a widespread disquiet about the technologizing of everyday life."

Strong words from a man who not only has his own polished website (www.calvin.edu/~schu/) and humming e-mail accounts on a high-speed cable modem, but who is also one of the founders of the Gospel Communications Network (www.gospelcom.net/), the most popular religious website in the world.

He has seen first-hand the power of wise use of the web to touch and change lives. Yet, he worries if truly authentic communication is increasingly rare in today's high-tech world. His new book is a working out of that wondering. And he concludes that authentic communication is still possible. But it will take some effort and some new ways of looking at technology and communication, new ways that have their foundation in the old ways of such thinkers as Alexis de Tocqueville, Václav Havel and St. Augustine, to name only a few.

"My goal" in this book, he says, "is not so much to discard database and messaging technologies as much as to adapt them to venerable ways of life anchored in age-old virtues. History shows that every technological advance also delivers us to new moral quandaries. If we do not address such moral dilemmas, we will lose our capacity to act responsibly."



CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

Professor Quentin Schultze

the midst of all the movie's "end of the world" talk. The audience watches in horror a very human occurrence.

If you are familiar with M. Night Shyamalan's movies, you know he is famous for the twist ending. Both *The Sixth Sense* and *Unbreakable* played with important plot devices with a revelation at the end to put the entire film into a new perspective. *Signs* does something similar, but this time the director plays with character devices instead of plot to bring the film to its conclusion.

Is the world ruled by predestination or coincidences? Is it a coincidence that the movie started film last year on September 13? In a recent article, Shyamalan states, "We just all kind of shook our heads at the parallels between the movie and what happened on 9-11. If you wanted to, you could read a lot into this fictional story of this alien threat and its implications on one family. So much of the dialogue was now loaded with meaning."

Perhaps the film itself is a sign of God's providential hand.



Church

Five hundred killed in religious conflict in Nigeria

Thousands left homeless after Muslim-Christian clashes

Obed Minchakpu

WASE, Nigeria (Compass) — Some 500 persons died in an outbreak of religious violence between Muslims and Christians in Wase, a town in Plateau state in northern Nigeria. The incidents reportedly occurred on July 12.

Prominent Christian leaders were among those killed in the tragedy. They are Vincent Lar, a community leader in Wase, the Hon. Gabriel Kumdum, a prominent political leader in the area, and Mr. Tsaih Bakinrijia, a former police chief.

Solomon Lar, former governor of Plateau state, told Compass in Jos that the three men, as well as other Christians, were attacked and killed in their homes. More than 10 Christian communities were ravaged and destroyed in the conflict, including Magon wada, Salwe, Lamba, Gbewa kogi, Nasarawa, Bakinrijia and Chakwai.

Mr. Lar, who currently serves as Advisor Emeritus to Nigeria's

president Olusegun Obasanjo, said that more than 10,000 Christians have been displaced in these villages and are now living as refugees. Religious conflict has led to the complete destruction of church buildings and worship centers in the town of Wase.

The Wase Local Government Area has a population of 102,491 persons. Christians constitute more than 66 per cent of the population, although Muslims predominate in the town itself.

Bodies litter the town

Alhaji Danjuma Idris, a Muslim, serves as Transition Committee Chairman of the Wase Local Government Council. He told Compass that the victims' bodies still littered the town and surrounding villages. "This is because of the pocket of violence still persisting in some areas," he said.

On July 26, the Rev. Canon S. Miner of the Nigerian Anglican Communion published an advertisement in Nigerian newspapers to heighten public awareness of the tragedy unfolding in Plateau state.

"First and foremost is the fact that since July 3, 2002, till this

moment, 88 village settlements populated by the Christian Taroh people have been attacked and totally destroyed, resulting in more than 100,000 displaced persons rendered homeless in their fatherland," Rev. Miner said.

"The casualty figures are steadily rising, but at this moment, more than 5,000 deaths have been reported. These were Christians, taken unawares and brutally murdered

in these attacks. Women and children were not spared. In almost every case, the women were raped first and then slaughtered.

"The grudge against the Taroh Christians is that they enabled Christianity to become firmly established in this part of the country. We recognize the violence unleashed against church buildings, the holy men and the Taroh Christians generally in this light,"

he added.

Rev. Miner told Compass that 10 camps for displaced persons have been established. Thousands are being sheltered by relatives and volunteers. Others find accommodation in schools, churches and town halls.

"There is no food. Health and hygiene facilities are nil and there is a very grave risk of outbreak of epidemics," he said.

Nigerian province imposes Arabic language on Christians

Obed Minchakpu

GUSSAU, Nigeria (Compass) — In a controversial step sure to inflame religious tensions in Nigeria, the governor of the northern state of Zamfara, Ahmed Sani, a Muslim, announced the enforced use of the Arabic language by all residents of the state, including Christians.

Sani, who introduced sharia, the Islamic legal code, to states in northern Nigeria in 1999, said he will enforce the teaching and usage of Arabic in order to enhance the Islamic faith among the people, regardless of their religious persuasion.

The governor disclosed his plan on July 25, in a speech to participants of a five-day workshop for Islamic clerics held in Gussau, the Zamfara state capital. The Saudi Arabia Embassy in Nigeria organized the event, which took place at the Jibrin Bala Yakubu Secretariat.

The governor said that enforced usage of Arabic would foster the relationship between the residents of the state and the Arab world. He said arrangements have already been completed to organize education programs.

"Very soon we shall organize a course for Arabic language so that we don't have to speak in Hausa if we are communicating with you," he told the officials from the Saudi embassy. "We will do our best to make sure that we understand and speak Arabic."

Arabic compulsory in schools

Sani explained that the state government had already made the language compulsory in its schools from primary to the secondary level, adding that what was left was to organize lessons for adults to learn Arabic.

While thanking the Saudi authorities for their support of his administration in the state since the implementation of sharia, Sani noted that God has entrusted Saudi



BBC NEWS PHOTO

Muslim women in Zamfara, Nigeria, whose governor wants to enforce the teaching and usage of Arabic in order to enhance the Islamic faith.

Arabia with the responsibility of taking care of the Islamic religion. He commended them for being faithful in the task of ensuring the progress of Islam around the globe.

Sani thanked Nigerian Islamic clerics for their unity, which resulted in the successful implementation of the Islamic legal system, and urged the leaders to continue in their work of entrenching Islam in Nigeria. He also expressed happiness that other states now look up to Zamfara for direction towards the total Islamization of Nigeria.

Meanwhile, the volatile mix of politics and religion continued to inflame tensions in Nigeria.

In Kasuwan Magani, a town in the northern state of Kaduna, both Muslims and Christians engaged in an effort to end election-induced violence that followed recent primaries held by the Peoples' Democratic Party. This ruling political party gained power in 1999 after more than 15 years of uninterrupted military rule in the country.

Alhaji Alhassan Usman, a Muslim who lost one of his sons in the violence, told Compass that the election ignited a religious time bomb that had remained buried in the town following the introduction of sharia in the state.

Alhaji Alhassan, who has lived

in Kasuwan Magani for over 25 years, said that some politicians decided to perpetrate themselves in power by whipping up religious sentiment, thereby giving the election a religious dimension.

Manipulation of elections

"In a situation where peaceful elections were expected, where people would cast their votes and leave the arena without any havoc, the manipulation of the July 15 elections by my fellow Muslims proved contrary," he said.

Danmalam Ma'aji, pastor of the Bishara Baptist Church in Kasuwan Magani, described the violence as the work of the devil. "Both Muslims and Christians in the community have been living in peace with each other without any molestation from anyone," he told Compass. "Why should people manipulate us now at election time to vote along religious lines?"

The divisional police officer in charge of Kasuwan Magani confirmed the violent incidents and expressed fears that Nigeria is facing a serious problem, given the magnitude of election manipulation.

Seniors project developed with energy and Christian spirit

Future residents of Shalom Evergreen Terrace prepare for occupancy this Fall. With 80% of suites sold this new Life Lease Christian community, designed exclusively for seniors 55 plus has filled a need for an alternative housing option. This is a community you can have faith in!

For anyone considering this quality lifestyle, now is the time. History tells us those who wait to see the paint on the wall will have to endure a long waiting list and higher prices!

To learn more about this Christian community, plan to attend Monday Open Houses from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon at Mountainview CRC, 290 Main St. East, Grimsby Call (905) 309-7888 for information.



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Church

American evangelicals divided over Bush's Middle East policy

Ron Brackin (*Special Correspondent, ASSIST News Service*)

OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, ISRAEL (ANS) — Evangelical Palestinian Christians received two pieces of good news recently.

The first came in the form of a letter to President Bush, signed by scores of prominent American evangelical leaders. The letter opened by condemning violence by both sides and encouraging "an even-handed U.S. policy" towards both Israelis and Palestinians.

Dramatic departure

The final two paragraphs, however, were a dramatic departure

from the staunch pro-Israel posture of several other leading evangelical leaders.

"We urge you to provide the leadership necessary for peace-making in the Middle East by vigorously opposing injustice, including the continued unlawful and degrading Israeli settlement movement," the letter concluded. "The theft of Palestinian land and the destruction of Palestinian homes and fields is surely one of the major causes of the strife that has resulted in terrorism and the loss of so many Israeli and Palestinian lives. The continued Israeli military occupation that daily hu-

miliates ordinary Palestinians is also having disastrous effects on the Israeli soul.

"Mr. President, the American evangelical community is not a monolithic bloc in full and firm support of present Israeli policy. Significant numbers of American evangelicals reject the way some have distorted biblical passages as their rationale for uncritical support for every policy and action of the Israeli government instead of judging all actions — of both Israelis and Palestinians — on the basis of biblical standards of justice. The great Hebrew prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah, declared in the Old Tes-

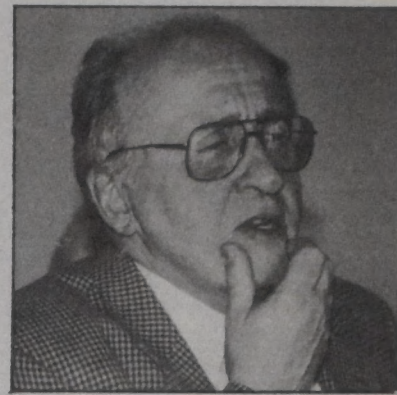
tament that God calls all nations and all people to do justice one to another, and to protect the oppressed, the alien, the fatherless and the widow."

Not quite in sync

In an interview with *The Washington Post*, signer and Fuller Seminary president Richard J. Mouw commented that the letter informs President Bush that "there are some of us who are not quite in sync with the loudest voices. And if you're motivated by a desire to please the evangelical community, you've got to know that some of us are not pleased by the heavy-handed favoring of the Israeli side in all of this."

Wheaton College theology professor Gary M. Burge added that "Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, just to take two names, do not represent the evangelical voice of America. They represent a segment ... but not the majority."

A copy of the letter was sent to Secretary of State Colin Powell and signed by, among others: Clive Calver, President, World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE); Tony Campolo, President, Evangelical Association for the Promotion of Education; John De Haan, Executive Director, Association of Evangelical Relief & Development Organizations (AERDO); David H. Engelhard, General Secretary, Christian Reformed Church in North America; Leighton Ford, President, Leighton Ford Ministries; Vernon Grounds, Chancellor, Denver Seminary; Steve Hayner, Past President InterVarsity, USA; Peter Kuzmic, Distinguished Professor of World Missions & European Studies, Gordon-Conwell Seminary; Gordon MacDonald, Board Chairman,



CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

Fuller Seminary president Richard Mouw has criticized Bush's "heavy-handed favoring of the Israeli side..."

World Relief of the NAE; Richard J. Mouw, President, Fuller Seminary; David Neff, Editor, Christianity Today; John Ortberg, Teaching Pastor, Willow Creek Community Church; John M. Perkins, President, John M. Perkins Foundation, Chairman Emeritus, Christian Community Development Association; Andrew Ryskamp, Executive Director, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee US; Ronald J. Sider, President, Evangelicals for Social Action; Luci N. Shaw, Author, Lecturer, Writer in Residence, Regent College, Vancouver, B.C., Canada; James Skillen, President, Center for Public Justice; Glen Harold Stassen, Professor of Christian Ethics, Fuller Seminary; Richard Stearns, President, World Vision U.S.; Philip Yancey, Author.

Pastor and wife reunited

A second piece of good news arrived this week in the beleaguered Gaza Strip, when Dr. Hanna Massad, pastor of Gaza Baptist Church, learned that the Israeli high court has decided to allow his wife, Suhad to come home.

The two were married last October. Three months later, when Pastor Massad was called to the United States on ministry business, his wife went to Jordan to visit her parents. For no stated reason, the Israeli Embassy refused to allow her to return to her husband in Gaza.

Several times, her visa requests were denied, as Western Christians prayed and petitioned the Israeli ambassador. Finally, Pastor Massad procured the services of Christian attorney Jonathan Kuttub of Jerusalem who finally succeeded in obtaining her release.

Ron Brackin is a freelance writer in Little Elm, Texas.

Two selves

"Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." (Psalm 42:5, 11; 43:5)

These words are the refrain of Psalms 42 and 43, two psalms which actually constitute a single literary whole. Some ancient Hebrew manuscripts actually write them together as a single psalm, and there are other indications as well that they should be read as a unitary literary whole. It is also striking, for example, that Psalm 43 does not have a heading of its own, even though all the surrounding psalms (from 34 to 90) do have separate headings.

Literary pattern

What clinches the matter is the overall literary pattern of Psalms 42 and 43 when they are read together. Three times we have the pattern: four verses plus refrain — an overall pattern which has a telling and significant twist right at its center. In the middle of the central four-verse stanza the poet has inserted an extra verse, Psalm 42:8, which stands out as a ringing affirmation of faith sandwiched between verses which describe the psalmist's desperate circumstances. That extra verse is also the only place in this double psalm where the divine name Yahweh, the LORD, appears. All of these features testify to the psalmist's conscious literary art in constructing this unitary poem. Perhaps it was later separated into two parts (Psalms 42 and 43) for liturgical reasons, with different segments of the worshipping community reciting each part.

The doubleness of the Psalmist

Apart from this literary artistry, a striking feature of Psalm 42-43 — a feature which comes out clearly in the well-known refrain quoted above — is the strange doubleness of the psalmist. On the one hand, he is in despair. He longs desperately for God's presence (42:1-2), he is constantly weeping and being taunted for his faith (42:3), he appears to be in exile (42:6), he is overwhelmed with troubles as with cascading waterfalls (42:7), he feels forgotten by God, grief-stricken, oppressed by his enemies (42:10), he is in physical agony (42:10), he suffers injustice from wicked men (43:1), and he feels rejected by God (43:2). On the other hand, he speaks with the confidence and joy of faith. He addresses God as "my

Chapter & Verse

Al Wolters



Savior" (42:5), "my God" (42:6 etc.), "my Rock" (42:9), "my joy" and "my delight" (43:4). He remembers the joy of worshipping God in the temple (42:4), he envisages God's light and truth, like personified agents, bringing him back to the presence of God in Zion (43:3), and speaks confidently of going again to God's altar and praising him (43:4). This twofold attitude of sorrow and joy, of despair and hope, comes out clearly in the refrain, where the psalmist exhorts himself to have hope. It is as though he is two selves, and in the refrain the hopeful self addresses the despairing self in order to encourage him.

Painful present, but joyful past, future

It is also instructive to notice how the psalmist manages to do this. Although he finds himself in a painful present, he finds hope through looking at a joyful past and a joyful future. Through the exercise of what we might call the imagination of faith he remembers the times when he was joyfully praising God (42:4), and he looks forward in faith to the time when he will once more joyfully praise God (43:4). In this way, although he fully acknowledges the severe distress of the present, he can put it in perspective — can in a sense transcend it — by grasping in faith the reality of joy in both past and future. In this way the self of faith and hope, anchored in past and future, can encourage the self of anguish and despair, overwhelmed (but not imprisoned) by the present.

Psalm 42-43 can teach us, among other things, that by remembering God's goodness in the past, and by relying on the promise of God's goodness in the future, we can receive strength and hope when God's goodness seems absent in the present.



Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario. This column is for Henry Lok of Victoria, B.C., old friend and regular reader of this column, who wondered whether I had stopped writing it. No I haven't — just missed a few deadlines.



MARIAN VAN TIL

David Engelhard

Family/News

Goodbye, my kindergarten guy

Lisa M. Petsche

I can hardly believe my six-year-old son Sean is in First Grade. It's a milestone not just for him but for me as well: all my children are now in school full-time.

I have no doubt Sean is ready for Grade One. I'm just not sure I am.

Like many at-home parents, I've long fantasized about the things I would do when I was alone during the week. But now that the time I thought would never come is here, I'm sad to think there will be no more 'kindergarteners' in our household.

Missing special 'buddy times'

I'll miss our special "buddy times" when Sean and I were home together, just the two of us. I'll also miss the enthusiastic, activity-based learning kindergarten involves, of which I've vicariously been a part.

Thanks to the monthly newsletter sent home by Sean's teacher, I always knew what was going on in his classroom. Monthly themes included family, friends, plants, the various seasons, community helpers and summer safety.

Upon his return from school,



COMESTOCK

Sean would excitedly demonstrate his newfound knowledge. For example, he would show me how to "stop, drop and roll" in the event that I caught fire, or recite with gusto the sun safety motto, "Slip on a shirt, slap on a hat and slop on some sunscreen." I would ask him who had been the "happy helper" that day, and inquire what his classmates had talked about or brought in for sharing day. Sean had a hard

time narrowing down what he was going to show or tell each month — a major life decision for a five-year-old.

Then there were the special events on the kindergarten itinerary: neighborhood walkabouts, a teddy bear picnic, pretend sleep-over day, and a Mother's Day tea party, among others. Sean counted the days (actually, the number of sleeps) until each of these occa-

sions, and I made sure he headed off with the necessary materials, be they an egg carton, a stuffed animal and blanket or a sundae topping.

I also enjoyed the periodic observation times when parents were invited to join the class as onlookers for a couple of hours. That's how I learned about belly spelling, for example: small groups of students take turns standing in front of the class, where each receives a jumbo letter of the alphabet on a placard; they hold it against their stomach and arrange themselves in the right order to spell a word.

Paper butterflies

Other things I'll miss include those large, primary-colored paintings drawn with thick brushes; rainbows and butterflies made of tissue paper rosettes (involving painstakingly wrapping colored squares around the end of a pencil and gluing them in place); sunflowers with real seeds pasted on; and many other wonderful creations. Each season and special occasion, Sean proudly produced artwork to decorate the classroom and then our home.

And of course there were the precious Mother's Day and Father's Day gifts — always keepsake material.

The end of kindergarten also means the end of learning rhymes with cute actions, observing "letter of the week" and "color of the

month," and collecting "beautiful junk" — buttons, corks, fabric scraps, wallpaper samples and the like — for classroom projects. Now that I think about it, there was a lot to keep track of, but doing so was fun.

Sean knew big changes were in store, without my having to say anything. On his last day of kindergarten, he solemnly stated, "I'll be going to Grade One, where there's no play time. You just keep working and working and working, every day." I'm sure his big sisters influenced this grim view. But he's no fool, either — he noticed that the First-Grade classroom contains rows of desks rather than toy bins and play centres.

Fortunately, I have no doubt Sean is ready for Grade One. I'm just not sure I am.

Sean must have sensed my wistfulness when he came into the kitchen for breakfast on the first day of school. "Even though I'm in Grade One now, you can still call me your kindergarten kid if you want," he pronounced reassuringly.

I'll try not to, though. After all, I want to teach my kids to embrace the new opportunities that await them, rather than cling to the past.

So goodbye, my little kindergarten guy.

Lisa M. Petsche is a mother of three and freelance writer.

Colombian pastor killed in plot to eliminate all municipal officials

David Miller

LOS ANGELES (Compass) — On August 3, unidentified assassins from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebel group ambushed and killed Rev. Adelmo Cabrera Polanco and his adult son, Luis Carlos. The two were returning to their home in the town of Puerto Rico in the area of San Vicente del Caguán, Colombia.

Cabrera, pastor of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in

Puerto Rico for the past 18 years, left a widow and five children. The Cabreras were raising a grandson, orphaned when his father died several years ago in Colombia's civil violence.

Public service led to murder

Adelmo Cabrera also served as president of the Puerto Rico municipal council. His public service apparently led to his murder. Last month, the FARC high command

issued an ultimatum to local government officials in Colombia. The rebels demanded that all mayors, judges and state governors immediately resign their posts or face retaliation.

According to fellow evangelical ministers, Cabrera resigned several weeks ago as municipal president in response to the threat. Nevertheless, FARC carried out the assassination.

Since the rebel group announced its intention of eliminating elected officials, 222 mayors have abandoned their posts, leaving some 35 municipal governments "in total paralysis," according to the Bogotá newspaper *El Tiempo*. Evidently, FARC copied the strategy from the Viet Cong, the guerrilla army that helped overthrow U.S.-backed South Vietnam in 1975. Social anarchy resulted from the mass resignations and assassinations of municipal leaders in Vietnam. Analysts say this was a turning point in the communists' rise to power.

To counter the FARC threat, the Colombia government has earmarked \$1.6 million to pay for tighter security for local politicians. The U.S. Embassy in Bogotá reportedly donated \$1 million of

this amount, which will be used to provide city officials with more bodyguards and, perhaps, bullet-proof vests and guns.

However, few politicians feel that arming themselves against the FARC will prove effective. "It's not a good idea because it will increase violence in the midst of the conflict," Jose Daniel Cardona, mayor of the town of San Francisco in Antioquia state, told *El Tiempo*.

Four pastors died violently

Justapaz, a Christian non-profit organization with headquarters in Bogotá, told Compass that at least four pastors of evangelical churches have died violently in the San Vicente del Caguán area since late February, when peace talks between the FARC and the Colombia government broke down. Attacks against the civilian population, in the form of car bombs, assassinations and kidnappings, have dramatically increased since then.

The 15,000 square-mile "demilitarized zone" in the state of Caquetá, formerly controlled by

FARC forces, has experienced the brunt of attacks against evangelical churches and their leaders in recent months.

In early August, the BBC reported that FARC guerrillas shot dead Abel Ruiz, pastor of a Pentecostal church in the former de-militarized zone. According to the BBC, Ruiz died while speaking to members of his congregation.

Since 1988, civil unrest in this South America nation of 38 million has claimed the lives of at least 70 evangelical ministers and 29 Roman Catholic priests.

Alvaro Uribe, the new president of Colombia, was himself the target of an assassination attempt last spring while campaigning in Barranquilla. In contrast to traditional ceremonies, officials scheduled his August 7 inauguration to take place behind closed doors in the Congressional building, instead of Bogotá's Plaza de Bolívar.

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News/Psychology

Champion child

Marcia Lee Laycock

The list of medical complications accompanying the infant in Val Carlson's arms was longer than he was. Believed to be deaf, blind and severely mentally handicapped, he was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, hypertension, thyroid problems and renal failure. He weighed one pound, 13 ounces.

When she first held him, Val says, "I told Chuckie I would love and care for him. One eye focused on me, and I knew he had some sight. Then a bonding happened, as strong as any I'd had with my own children." After a crash course on caring for the seven-month-old, Val and her husband, Blaine, took Chuckie home. No one expected him to reach his first birthday.

Living with a profound mystery

A poem by G.K. Chesterton reads: "Here dies another day And with tomorrow begins another. Why am I allowed two?" Chuckie and his family live with that profound mystery. At age three, while on kidney dialysis, he almost died from a bleeding ulcer. High fevers caused grand mal seizures. He suffered with asthma. In 1997, glaucoma took his right eye. When a kidney transplant almost failed, the treatment caused his ulcer to hemorrhage. Six months later he was diagnosed with Lymphoma. Again, the Carlsons took him home to die. But God had another plan.

In tears, crying to God

It has not always been easy to keep God's plan in perspective. After the transplant, Val remembers, "I was in tears, crying out to God because I did not have the physical strength to continue." It was at these times Val's family responded. "Blaine deserves a lot of credit, and so do my kids. My sister would also help when I couldn't cope. And God gave me poetry. I'd write and cry and there would be a release, and I knew God had helped me."

"As far as our faith is concerned," Val states, "taking Chuckie home began a new chapter." There have been hard times, nights of crying and praying. "Often I didn't know it," Val admits, "but God was always there." Perhaps Chuckie says it best, himself: "When my mom and I pray at night, she closes the door and Jesus is with us."

There are those who question the effort and expense of sustaining Chuckie, but the Carlsons have never doubted his worth. "I've seen people watch Chuckie with a kind of awe, Val says quietly. "We can

tell everyone he's a living miracle, but when they meet him, they see the miracle for themselves."

Thousands of people have had that chance. On November 17, 2001, the Carlsons introduced 10-year-old Chuckie to The Independent Order of Foresters, sponsors of the Miracle Child Network, as their Champion Child in Northern Alberta and the Territories. On March 22, the Carlsons traveled to Ottawa where they had lunch with The Speaker of the House and Members of Parliament, including Joe Clark.

Chuckie took the opportunity to present Deputy Prime Minister John Manley with letters and pleas from parents concerning the closing of Riverside School in Ponoka, Alberta, where Chuckie attends. He also enjoyed meeting celebrities, Natalie McMaster and "Pinball" Clemons. Then, on March 24, Chuckie and the other Champions from across Canada boarded a plane for Orlando, Florida. There they joined others from across the United States for a trip to Disney World and the Children's Miracle Network Celebration.*

An unforgettable impression

The highlight of Chuckie's time in Orlando was a live radio interview with two announcers from Edmonton's Power 92 (CKNG-FM). Heard throughout Alberta, the broadcast was to have been five to 10 minutes in length, but the interviewers realized they were doing something special. The program ran for almost a full hour and later won two awards, for the best promotional piece and the best montage. Wherever Chuckie goes, he leaves an unforgettable impression. His passion for life and love for those around him, his family, and for God, is powerful evidence of what it means to be blessed.

To his parents, Chuckie's life is a gift, one they treasure each day, for they know it may be gone tomorrow. Today, they rejoice in knowing the original kidney disease has not returned, his body has not rejected the new kidney and the cancer remains in remission. The Carlsons kept their promise to Chuckie, but they do not see themselves as heroes or martyrs.

"Chuckie's faith has been an example to us," Val states. "For God to have chosen us to raise him, at times I'm overwhelmed by that. I truly feel I'm not worthy to have been given such a gift."

* The Children's Miracle Network Telethon, complete with clips of Chuckie's adventures, aired across North America June 1 and 2 this year.

Summer musings about wisdom in the mind

"Wisdom that remains in the mind as an idea, rather than becoming incorporated into the tapestry of who we are, cannot change us. It just sits in the concept file.... We become like the college professor who went to visit a Buddhist monk. Holding out his tea cup to be filled, the professor was shocked when the monk continued to pour tea until the cup overflowed. 'Why did you do that?' sputtered the professor. The Zen monk smiled kindly, 'Your mind is like that cup. It is so full of concepts that there isn't room for any wisdom.'" Joan Borysenko

Some time ago I attended a birthday party a friend gave for her father who had just turned 80. He struggled with arthritis and walked with a limp. The twinkle in his eye, however, displayed his merriment as he mused about whether his age qualified him for some of Solomon's wisdom. At the same time he wondered what wisdom was really about.

Defining wisdom

The Webster dictionary defines "wisdom" as "knowledge and good judgement based on experience; being wise...wise conduct; wise words...prudence, discretion." At the same time Webster defines "Wisdom" with a capital W as "a form of literature common to the ancient Egyptians, Syrians and Mesopotamians, consisting chiefly of wise sayings, and exemplified by the Old Testament books of Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes and Wisdom of Solomon." What is clear from these definitions is that wisdom is evident in our words and behavior.

We live in an information age and there is a smorgasbord of theories and concepts available to us so that we can be more effective in our mental, emotional and spiritual life. Schools, colleges and churches are also involved in this area. This column itself is part of this particular smorgasbord. All of this can be helpful for us to function well in

Getting Unstuck

Arlene Van Hove

the 21st century.

Therapy is no different. The insights we gain are concepts we need to learn. But again, do we actually change?

Ready to throw in the towel

Frederick and Joan are both 48 years old. They have been married for 27 years. They are in constant conflict and have been so for most of their married life. They saw a therapist a few times in the first five years of married life. But they mutually agreed it "didn't work." At the same time, their shelves are heavy with self-help books of all kind and Joan is an avid fan of workshops and seminars. Now, however, they want to throw in the towel, because they "just don't fit together." They feel there is little hope for their marriage but as Christians feel bad about the pending separation and eventual divorce.

I ask them to think back to their therapy sessions in the early part of their marriage. What did they think their issue was at that time? What insights did they gain about themselves and their marriage? What change was needed on both of their parts to make things work better?

Taking time to become wise

We know being wise is a good thing. Frederick and Joan are like flies who spend at lot of their energies flying against a closed window in an attempt to get outside. They try hard but are stuck in the same pattern. They need to do something different. They need to incorporate changes into their relationship as well as into their feelings, thoughts and behaviors.

In other words, into who they are as people. This will take time as they need to unclutter their mind and make room for wisdom.



Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.

Teens abstaining from sex at higher rate than 10 years ago

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — More teenagers are abstaining from sexual activity now than a decade ago, according to a report this summer by Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, a study conducted every two years by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Teens raising standards

In 1990, the study found that 54.3 percent of teens in grades nine through 12 had had sexual intercourse. By 2001, that number had dropped to 44.6 percent, a difference of nearly 10 percent.

Experts cite several reasons for the decline.

"They're raising their standards," Leslee Unruh, president of Abstinence Clearinghouse, told CNSNews.com. "They're saying they know the difference between lust and love. And they're choosing love."

Others believe teenagers are more aware of the dangers associated with premarital sex as a result of the expansion of sex education since the mid-1990s.

"There is no doubt that kids are responding to an unambiguous abstinence message," Peter Brandt of Focus on the Family said in *The Washington Times*, July 22. "The abstinence program is having a tremendous impact."

Despite the significant decline in teen sexual activity, Kristin A. Moore, president of Child Trends, Inc., said in *The Washington Times*, "I don't think it's strong enough to be a U-turn. It's trending down, but even with improvements, we have a lot of kids who are having risky sex."

Syndicated columnist Maggie Gallagher took note of the key component of successful pregnancy prevention programs in a July 23 column: "You gotta tell the kids it is a bad idea to have a baby while a teenager. What works, in general, is responsible adults talking straight with teens. Many will listen and learn."

Art

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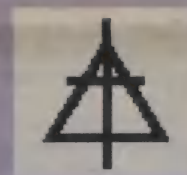
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... continued from page 1

skeptical, so driven to ask questions and pressured to settle for answers that are inadequate and temporal.

"In this climate," he says, "it is more important that our church understand itself and less likely that it will."

Rediscovering shared ministry

Matth's paintings are meant to reacquaint us with our identity in the body of Christ, he explains. He hopes that the church will rediscover shared ministry, in which we bind ourselves to the work of God in the world. The paintings speak these things in bright colors and strong lines, a pictorial tour of life in the body of Christ through the eyes of a Reformed believer.

Matth himself sees the world through new eyes these days. He speaks of last year as a "lifetime ago." July of 2001 found Matth battling depression and wishing nothing more than that he could "disappear from this earth." Among other things, he had taken on a physically demanding job — a mural on a building exterior — and each trip up the scaffolding filled him with dread. His dis-

comfort with that work was only one symptom of a much larger ill. A creeping sense of despair ultimately became unbearable.

Cupido advised to leave church

Matth speaks with tender admiration for Willie, his wife of 37 years, and of his good friend and writing partner, Ron MacInnis,

The sign welcoming visitors to his studio reads, 'Grace and favor nurture Renaissance.'

who took hold of him, listened to him, and ministered to him with great patience. Retreating to his studio, a place of quiet comfort, Matth turned his focus to small projects. He saw a doctor who cared well for him but advised him unequivocally to leave the church behind.

"I told the doctor," Matth says with a twinkle in his eye, "that there was a ballpark in which he was allowed to play, and that this

was *not* in his ballpark."

Matth is a committed elder and describes himself as a faithful irritant on the council of Kentville CRC.

Of his illness and his ongoing recovery, Matth says, "It has enlarged my dependence but has allowed me to celebrate a kind of freedom."

The sign welcoming visitors to his studio reads, "Grace and favor nurture Renaissance" — and Matth attests to having experienced both. He loves life and credits God with fashioning one for him that Matth himself never could have constructed.

It's time to give

When his new studio was built in the fall of 2000, Matth anticipated a need to focus on commercial work but instead has found himself free to take on projects of his choosing, without consideration of money. He feels that it is his time to give and sees his work in that light.

Matth has several series underway. Exhibit number 62, "Forging Babylon," addresses the centralization of power. Exhibit number 63 will be a rendering of selected

passages from the Song of Songs.

Matth also works on miniatures, which were his first passion, and are an enduring interest. He is creating a presence on the Internet titled "Matth's Box Miniatures" and finds it amusing that his life as an artist, begun at the age of three, when he drew tiny pictures on matchbox "canvasses," has come full circle.

Continuing to dream

Yet Matth continues to dream. Tacked to one of the wall studs of his studio are drawings of an art centre, a home for salon concerts and art exhibitions — his work and that of others. When he looks out the window, he can see where it will stand.

Matth's new take on life means that he doesn't feel an unpleasant urgency about his work. He doesn't wonder anymore whether he will arrive at his destination. What's most important, he says, is that he just keep walking in the right direction.

For information on ordering one or more of the prints Matth Cupido has donated to the CRC, please see ad on this page.

Fiction

Our two weeks with Dawson (a.k.a. Bentley)

Ron de Boer

When Dawson hopped out of the van, sniffed the air in our house, looked Karen and me up and down, he knew within six seconds we'd never owned a dog. It was during these first moments that the year-old golden retriever hatched a plan to wreak havoc on our lives in a two-week hiatus that I'm sure he still chuckles himself to sleep about, in some doghouse in his hometown of Orangeville, Ont.

He looked at me as if to say, "I'm King of this castle now, buddy, so you can just go cut the grass or something."

We'd been planning to "try out" a dog for the past three years. The kids had coerced us into weekly visits to the local humane society, where we hooked a leash to the latest mangy mutt who'd been thrown into the clink and rolled around on the grass with a menagerie of collies, poodles and beagles. I had grown up with dogs on the family farm, but Karen didn't appreciate the affectionate licking-of-the-face dogs love to give. It would have to take a lot of convincing for her to commit to a dog, she'd always said. Every time she said it, she always looked at me, as if to say, "I already have one right there."

On the campus of our humane society is a pet cemetery where little bone-shaped gravestones remember the lives of the many Fifis, Fluffies and Killers who have passed on to that great Kennel in the misty beyond. "Do dogs go to heaven?" the eight year-old asked. "I think so," was my reply. "The Bible says little children will play with snakes. If snakes make it in, why wouldn't dogs?"

We were walking the latest inmate, a cockapoo named Harley, who had bad breath, a ratty mane and licked himself far too openly for Karen's liking. A woman walked up with a bouquet of flowers and placed them beside a German shepherd's gravestone with the words, "King 1992-2001, R.I.P." Karen and I glanced at each other and were about to snicker when the woman began dabbing her eyes with a Kleenex. She returned to her mini-van, sobbing.

I had no idea how much people



HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN ILLUSTRATIONS

loved their pets. Shortly before Dawson stretched and made himself at home in our house, a friend of mine took the day off work to hold the paw of his golden retriever during an operation — to repair the torn ligament in the dog's knee! For \$1,200, a vet will re-attach the ligament in your canine's limb. "Which professional basketball team does your mutt play for?" I asked, smiling. I was met with an icy glare. "He deserves a good quality of life," said my friend. I smiled again. "I think I'd be taking him to that other room at the vet's — the one with the picture of that big needle on the door." My friend stared at me gravely. "If you had a dog for 13 years, you wouldn't say such a thing."

So, after many visits to the humane society and countless hours of research on how-to-take-care-of-a-dog on the Internet, Karen — of all people — agreed to take Dawson into our home when a friend called to say her mother — the animal control officer of Orangeville — had found a golden retriever for us. Two weeks. No strings attached. We could return the mutt if we didn't want to keep him.

We should have known what we were in for when Dawson hopped out of the back of our friend's mini-van, dashed straight up the stairs into our kitchen, tore the tea-towel off the stove handle, and took off clicking down the hardwood floors toward the kids' bedrooms. There, he jumped onto a

bunk bed, turned round and round, dropped the tea-towel then dove toward the Lego pieces scattered on the floor. He inhaled once, packed his cheek with a bunch of Lego blocks and took off down the hall toward the living room where we managed to click his leash back on his collar and tricked him with a doggie snack to drop the Lego blocks.

Of course, all the kids wanted to walk him, pet him, and hug him. Dawson just sat smiling with his long pink tongue dripping something slimy out the side of his mouth. He looked at me as if to say, "I'm King of this castle now, buddy, so you can just go cut the

grass or something."

Dawson's story was that he was about one year old, was found wandering the streets of Orangeville without tags, and was ours if we wanted him. End of story. He was a homeless dog who still hadn't had the procedure that prevented him from "noticing" every female dog within sniffing distance. That's all we knew about him. During the first few minutes in our house, he had already attached himself to Karen's leg and hunched himself over one of the kids when they crouched on the floor to play with him. "Bad dog!" I said, pulling him off. "That

was funny, can I make him do that again?" said the four year-old. I could hear Karen snapping the pages of the phone book looking for a veterinarian already.

Our friends gave us a kennel to borrow, which we placed in the basement beside the furnace. This is where Dawson would sleep and where he'd be sent if he misbehaved.

The first night was easy. Dawson soaked up all the attention the kids could give him. He let them scratch behind his ears, and if they were really good, he let them give him snacks when he sat or shook a paw. After a nice leisurely walk through the neighborhood, Dawson did his business. I scooped it up in the plastic grocery bag I'd brought along, and we returned to the door. At bedtime, I took him by the collar and led him to the basement and his kennel. He pranced in co-operatively and I clicked the door behind him. "Good night, ol' buddy," I said as I clicked off the light. I felt like a character in one of those kids movies about dogs.

I settled myself in my chair to watch the 11:00 news when it started. Little yelps at first then full out, deep-throated woofs that vibrated the pictures. I threw open the door to the furnace room. "NO!" I said to the little bars in front of Dawson's face. He wagged his tail fiercely. "No!" I repeated. I returned to my chair.

Yelp... Yelp. Woof! WOOF!

"No!" I yelled from the recliner. Silence.

I'd hurt his feelings. I waited a few minutes then crept up to the

Continued on page 16...



Christian Living

Why go to church? (3)

To carry on a tradition

A.A. van Ruler

The third answer to our question 'Why go to church?' still remains somewhat on the surface. Or at least it looks that way. We are not yet seeking the meaning of church attendance in what happens in the worship service itself but in matters that appear to touch only the outside. There's some truth to this observation; yet, like the previous answer ("To keep up a custom"), the answer, "To carry on a tradition" does delve quite a ways into why we go to church.

At first glance, this answer sounds a lot like the previous one. What's the difference between carrying on a tradition and keeping up a custom? A custom has to do with being interwoven into a community; it gives us a cross-section of life. Tradition, on the other hand, has to do with life as it stretches across time; it weaves together different generations. While custom has something static about it, tradition is more dynamic.

As with custom, there are many facets in tradition that ought to be

carefully distinguished. That's why we must be wary about dismissing it too easily. Those who dismiss tradition because it implies conservatism are guilty of superficiality, for they overlook many of its essentials.

What does it mean to say that I go to church just to carry on a tradition? On the simplest level, it means I go to church because that's how I grew up. It's something I picked up from my parents: they set an example that I learned from, so I go to church faithfully and thereby carry on a family tradition.

Childish but not useful

Yes, there's something childish or naive about this way of thinking. But is it therefore completely worthless? Is the childlike part of human nature so worthless we can shed it without any loss? Must we, in fact, overcome it in order to become mature adults? Imagine what things would be like if we all did away with the child in us. Then all the wonder at life and the world around us would also be leached

from our hearts, and all the sparkle wiped from our eyes. We would be dead before we died.

Isn't it true that if everything is alright, a person maintains the ties with his parents all his life? He remembers the security and the intimacy of his parental home. Some say, in fact, that deep in the human heart there's not just a longing for the parental home but even a longing to return to the mother's womb. That has negative as well positive sides.

A person must affirm his birth; he must acknowledge himself. But he must also face the future. In his turn, he must establish his own home and perhaps become a mother or father in his own right. Yet, this does not take away from the fact that he is a child of his parents. He becomes a link in a chain. The life he received from his parents gets passed on to his children.

If he is a whole person, he will not only pass on biological life but also pieces of his social, cultural, moral and religious life. In this sense, he always, consciously or unconsciously, passes on the traditions of his parental home within his own. If going to church every Sunday was part of his youth, even if he never goes to church as an adult, he will never entirely lose that experience.

Into the dim, distant past

This process is not limited to the individual and his family. Memories reach back into the dim and distant past. My parents, too, had parents who were young once. And they, too, went to church. In this way, churchgoing has become deeply rooted in our unconscious life.

Of course, circumstances were very different in previous generations — technologically, socially and culturally. On the spiritual level, too, our forebears experienced reality very differently. But the church has been around as an institution for centuries. And so has churchgoing.

Going to church may have had a very different form then, and also a different function, perhaps even a wholly different content; yet, over the centuries it has worn a deep groove into our souls.

There have undoubtedly always been those who couldn't care less. The idea that in past ages everyone went to church as a matter of course, and that this changed only in the 20th century is false. Long, long ago, of course, no one in Europe went to church. And the first missionaries were killed. And even after the church was established, there were those who were indif-

ferent or hostile, there were heretics and nominal members who came just to be seen, as well as those who were truly committed and converted.

Still, this does not change the fact that in former times churchgoing was part of life in the community. In our time, however, the rhythms of human life are being dramatically altered. Soon we will have housing developments without churches, a weekly calendar without a day of worship, a social order without a rest day centred on going to church. Some welcome this. But do they really know what kind of future they are creating?

Even in pre-Christian times there was something akin to church, for there has always been some form of religion. People have always asked the final questions, not just theoretically but practically as well. They haven't just asked them; they've answered them too. They were wise enough to realize that a community cannot live on mere questioning, critical doubt and endless discussion; the knots need to be cut through at some point, answers given and acted on.

Religion has always been part of life

There have, therefore, always been myths expressing how people saw the cosmos and their place in it. And in connection with the myths there were rituals that kept life moving along these prescribed paths. The cultus (religion) has always been part of human life. Metaphysics has always been more than ideas. Religion has always been more than feelings and experiences. These have always found concrete, plastic, visible and tangible embodiment in the cultus.

The cultus was and still is what roots us, as individuals and as community, in the ground of our being — whatever we may understand the latter to be.

That we understand the ground



RTN/PEP SE JON THORDARSON

"On the simplest level, it means I go to church because that's how I grew up. It's something I picked up from my parents..."

of being in such a wide variety of conflicting ways is a tragedy in the history of humanity. Humanity is divided down to its very ground.

Will we pass on this tradition?

But we are talking about our practical rootedness in this ground of being. And the question is: Will we break with this primeval tradition? Or will we pass it on?

If we go into the future without any form of cultus, aren't we cutting the flower — of life, of community, of culture — from its roots to put it into a vase with water, where it will wither in just a few days? Can mankind do without any form of cultus, without that which is holy and that which creates communion? In the light of this question pertaining to the history of humanity, we might conclude that we go to church to consciously pass on tradition — the tradition of humanity itself. This is an answer with great cultural, social and individual import.

Throughout the ages and to this very day missionaries have continued the work of the Apostles. The heathen did, to be sure, practice their religion, their cultus. Although it still retained a considerable element of creaturely praise, it was at the same time badly overgrown with all sorts of corrupted and foolish elements.

Continued on page 15.

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Christian Living/Old Testament

... continued from page 15...

Subsequently, in the West, the text of creaturely praise was overwritten by the very different text of the apostolic gospel.

Two texts on top of each other

As a result, the worship service of the Christian church is a palimpsest, that is, a document in which two different texts are written on top of each other. This is why we never know exactly why we go to church. Do we go like Adam in Paradise for sheer creaturely praise? Or do we go like converted heathens for the apostolic gospel? Both figure into our experience. The two texts of the palimpsest have blended with each other. While the apostolic message of salvation in Christ gave new content to ancient worship, the heathen text of sheer creaturely praise also shaped and misshaped our liturgical expression of the apostolic gospel. The gospel was passed from Israel to all the nations of the earth through the Word of the Apostles, so the traditions of humanity are now bound up with the apostolic succession. And every church service is part of that tradition. We go to church also to pass on that tradition, for it means remaining spiritually in the line of the apostles and evangelists, in the apostolic succession.

We owe a lot to past

We owe a great deal of our words and values, formulas and truths to the past, not just a few phrases and ideals here and there. We do add a bit here and there, but in the long view this is rather minor. This is especially true in things philosophical and religious. With regard to the first and last questions of being (of the world) and existence (of mankind) we owe nearly everything to the past. Here Plato is more important than some contemporary pundit.

As soon as the apostolic tradition enters, however, entirely new questions appear. The evangelists and apostles stubbornly point to one specific historical fact: Jesus Christ and his resurrection. This is a uniquely Christian idea: truth is a historical reality. Similarly, values are a historical reality. All essential things are historical realities: the love of God for us; the liberation of humanity from bondage; the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. It all happened as history. Once and for all times. So it is past, behind us, and now we live and think out of this one tremendous historical reality.

The church is the community

which is a historical reality in unbroken continuity with this story of salvation. The Christian church is anchored in the facts of history. It must keep pointing to the past and live "in memory" (Do this in memory of me).

If it is true that salvation is historical reality and if the church is the communion with this salvation, then there is no salvation outside the church. In this way, reflection on the notion that we go to church to carry on a tradition is taken to its deepest meaning and intensity. Tradition, then, means transmitting, handing on, communicating the reality of a new, redeemed and eternal life. It is about more than words, truths and doctrines. It is about reality! About the reality of eternal life!

Breaking with tradition

It is, of course, possible for a Christian people to break with this tradition. There is no guarantee that the church of Christ and the kingdom of God will persist in the West. There is the promise that the church will not be overcome by the world, but it can be taken from the West and transplanted to Asia or Africa.

At the end of the 20th century, progressive Christians and theologians co-operated in a program to radically break with all ideology and to affirm the complete autonomy of the individual and the this-worldliness of earthly life. This strikes me as a pure fiction. Human reason is too powerful and too valuable to permit us to do without any form of ideology. Man is too limited a creature, too much a moment in the larger whole of a community, too much a link in the chain of generations, too dependent on what is true and good in itself to be able to sustain his supposed autonomy. And the worldliness of earthly life is a complete mystification, for it presupposes the distinction between the Creator and creation, which saves created reality from all forms of deification or nihilism. And it also completely ignores the fact that being and existence are themselves, in themselves, metaphysical and religious in nature and that they call forth all metaphysical and religious questions. To be religious, one doesn't have to imagine other worlds and then try to get into contact with them; the truly great mystery is that this world is here and that we are here, and this is what religion and philosophy are about. The worldliness of the world is itself a religious and metaphysical idea.

Carrying on the apostolic tradition is more about the content than

The Song of Moses

VATICAN CITY (Zenit.org) - The following is a translation of John Paul II's address given June 19.

"Then Moses recited the words of this song from beginning to end, for the whole assembly of Israel to hear" (Deuteronomy 31:30). This is how the canticle [song] in the last pages of the Book of Deuteronomy begins; it is a joyful hymn to the Lord who lovingly protects and cares for his people amid the day's dangers and difficulties. This liturgical canticle is placed at the very origins of the history of the people of Israel. On that prayerful page there is no lack of references and links to several Psalms or to the message of prophets: hence, it was a moving and intense expression of the faith of Israel.

Some scholars detect a literary genre that is technically defined with the Hebrew word "rib," namely "quarrel," "court litigation." The image of God present in the Bible is not at all that of a dark being, an anonymous and brute energy, an incomprehensible fact. Instead, he is a person who feels, acts and reacts, loves and condemns, who participates in the life of his creatures and is not indifferent to their actions. So, in our case, the Lord convokes a sort of trial in the presence of witnesses, denounces the crimes of the accused people, exacts a punishment, but lets his verdict be permeated by infinite mercy. Let us now follow the traces of this event.

Moses almost as a public prosecutor

First of all he mentions the cosmic spectator-witnesses: "Give ear, O heavens ... let the earth hearken ..." (Deuteronomy 32:1). In this symbolic trial Moses acts almost as a public prosecutor. His word is effective and fruitful, like the prophetic word, expression of the divine word. Note the significant flow of the images that define it: They are signs taken from nature like rain, dew, showers, drizzle and the spraying of water that makes the earth green and covers it with grain stalks (see verse 2).

The voice of Moses, prophet and interpreter of the divine word, announces the imminent appearance on the scene of the great judge, the Lord, whose most holy name he pronounces, exalting one of his many attributes. In fact, the Lord is called the Rock (verse 4), a title that is studied throughout our Canticle (see verses 15, 18, 30, 31, 37), an image that exalts God's stable and endless fidelity, very different from the instability and infidelity of the people. The topic is developed with a series of affirmations on divine justice: "How faultless are his deeds, how right all his ways! A faithful God, without deceit, how just and upright he is!" (verse 4).

After the solemn presentation of the supreme

Judge, who is also the injured party, the objective of the cantor is directed to the accused. In order to describe this, he takes recourse to an effective representation of God as father (see verse 6). His creatures, so loved, are called his children, but unfortunately, they are "degenerate children" (see verse 5). In fact, we know that already in the Old Testament there is an idea of God as a solicitous father in his meetings with his children who often disappoint him (Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 8:5; Psalm 102[103]:13; Sirach 51:10; Isaiah 1:2; 63:16; Hosea 11:1-4). Because of this, the denunciation is not cold but impassioned: "Is the Lord to be thus repaid by you, O stupid and foolish people? Has he not made you and established you?" (Deuteronomy 32:6). Indeed, rebelling against an implacable sovereign is very different from revolting against a loving father.

Moses appeals to the memory

In order to render concrete the gravity of the accusation and thus elicit a conversion that flows from the sincerity of the heart, Moses appeals to the memory: "Think back on the days of old, reflect on the years of age upon age" (verse 7). In fact, biblical faith is a "memorial," namely, a rediscovering of God's eternal action spread over time; it is to make present and effective that salvation that the Lord has given and continues to offer man. Hence, the great sin of infidelity coincides with "forgetfulness," which cancels the memory of the divine presence in us and in history.

The fundamental event that must not be forgotten is that of the crossing of the desert after the flight from Egypt, major topic of Deuteronomy and of the entire Pentateuch. So the terrible and dramatic journey in the Sinai desert is evoked, "a wasteland of howling desert" (see verse 10), described with an image of strong emotional impact. However, there God bends over his people with amazing tenderness and gentleness. The paternal symbol is intertwined with an allusion to the maternal symbol of the eagle: "He shielded them and cared for them, guarding them as the apple of his eye. As an eagle incites its nestlings forth by hovering over its brood, / So he spread his wings to receive them and bore them up on his pinions" (verses 10-11). Then the way in the desert steppe is transformed into a quiet and serene journey, because of the protective mantle of divine love.

The canticle also refers to Sinai, where Israel became the Lord's ally, his "portion" and "hereditary share," namely, the most precious reality (see verse 9; Exodus 19:5). Thus Moses' canticle becomes a collective examination of conscience, so that in the end the response to the divine benefits will no longer be sin but fidelity.

[Translation by ZENIT]

the form. So why shouldn't the content be poured into new forms? But, surprisingly enough, such new forms cannot be ordered at the psychology or sociology factory. In any case, the ingredients that go into baking the cake of the worship service or its replacement are essentially fixed. They are all pretty much part of the tradition. Some are, in fact, given as historical facts: the reading of Scripture, preaching (John the Baptist), Jesus and the Apostles, the sacraments.

Not that reflection on the liturgy is not necessary; it is. We must become much more aware of what we have. Liturgical renewal is indispensable, but notice that we invariably look back into history for it. As far as I can see, there's not all that much in the worship service that we can alter, at least, not if we don't want to end up with a small group of like-minded souls.

Anyone who wishes to keep up the apostolic tradition will participate in the ordinary church service

because, among other things, he consciously wants to carry on the tradition. He will take pleasure in the ordinary worship service. Liturgically aware, he will animate its forms with a new spirit. He will enthusiastically participate in liturgical renewal. But he will not await something totally different and totally new.

There is still another reason to carry on the tradition: so that it will be there for those who are seeking so that they too can plug into it.

Fiction

Our two weeks with Dawson (a.k.a. Bentley)

... continued from page 13

door of the furnace room. No sound at all. I dropped to my hands and knees, nudged the door open softly with my shoulder then crawled into the room. As I rounded the furnace, the cage came into view. There was Dawson, staring at me with his ears pricked up.

"You don't think he can understand you.... But he does. He understands every word you say."

WOOF! WOOF! I reversed crawled and sat outside the furnace room door. "No!" I repeated 23 times. "Woof," was his reply each time.

A half-hour later when I went to bed, Dawson was finally sleeping contentedly. I linked my hands behind my head and stared at the ceiling. This dog thing wasn't going to be so bad.

Karen was another story. When I told her about the dog with the knee surgery, she said she'd be taking that dog for a walk on the 401. When I told her dogs need to roam around during the day, she said, not in my house. Dawson got off on the wrong paw with Karen the very first morning by making the mistake of standing in the bathroom waiting for Karen to step out of the shower. After being fiercely shoed out, he returned a few minutes later and took a long drink out of the toilet while she brushed her teeth. At around mid-morning, I got a message at work with four words: "The dog's gotta go." When I phoned home, Karen had already made up her mind about Dawson. "He follows me everywhere, he jumps up on me when I sit down, he even eats the magnets off the refrigerator."

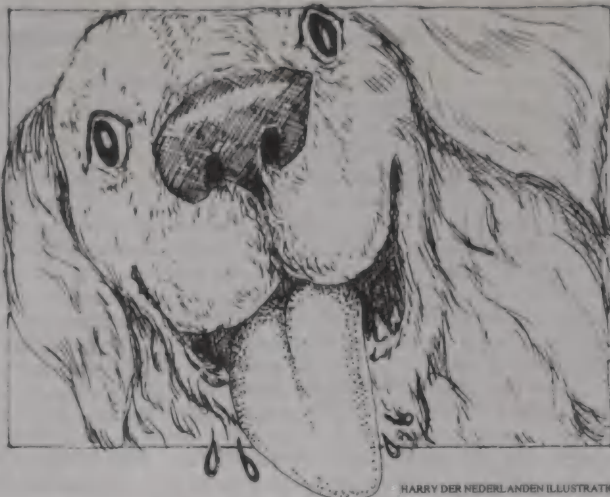
"Come on," I chuckled. Big mistake.

"And I can't get him in his kennel so I can do groceries."

"I'll be right home."

When I came through the door, Dawson took a flying leap from the top of the stairs as if to throw himself into my arms like a rock star. Then he tapped danced around me, drooled, and shoved his wet nose into my neck when I did doggy talk: "Yeah, there's a big boy, come here, you just need a little attention, don't you, don't you?" I looked up right then and saw Karen standing with her hands on her hips.

"The dog's got to go."



"It's been twelve hours," I said. "Give it time."

"You try and put him in his kennel," she said in that challenging way that really means, "You'll never get him in the kennel."

"Come here, Dawson," I called, walking confidently to the furnace room, glancing at Karen, as if to say, "Watch this."

Dawson bounded down the stairs, took one look inside the furnace room then ran backwards faster than any dog I'd ever seen. He leaped the stairs three at a time, clicked across the kitchen floor and hid under the table.

"Come here, you rascal," I called good-naturedly, glancing at Karen, who remained statuesque at the top of the stairs, hands on hips, eyebrows raised. I moved a couple of chairs out of the way to reach him then dragged him out by the paws. He just lay there. "Come on," I repeated, as if the dog could understand English.

I picked him up by his arm-pits the way you might with a small child wading into the water at the beach. The dog slouched even more. You'd swear he didn't have a bone in his body he made himself so slack. And tall. Stretched by the arm-pits, this golden retriever had to be pushing six foot two! He suddenly transformed into some hairy uncle who'd come for a visit but was too drunk to get into bed.

When I got him to the front of his kennel, he came to life for the first time, wiggling fiercely, but I managed to stuff him in. He stared forlornly at me through the bars as I locked his cell door.

"He's got to go," Karen said on the third night. We were on our hands and knees cleaning up the brown spot the size of a football on the living room rug which Dawson thought was the backyard.

"We've just got to learn to his

schedule," I said, scrubbing the brown footprints leading into the kitchen. "Plus, Stephanie will be crushed."

Stephanie is the 13-year-old expert on all things called Dog. She was the family researcher when finding out the best breeds for families of six. She found out the best combs for golden retrievers; she'd read the best way to walk a dog was with the dog on your left side and barked at you if you didn't comply. While the other three kids already regarded Dawson as the aforementioned uncle who has overstayed his welcome, Steph loyally walked him every day after school and made sure his water dish was full. She rolled around with him on the grass and knew just where Dawson liked to be petted.

"He's got to go," Karen said after a week, while watching me attempt to pry open Dawson's mouth after he ate the 11-year-old's teeth retainer, which he'd swept off the counter with a tongue that would rival an anteater's.

"He's just got to get used to what's important around here," I said.

Stephanie covered Dawson's ears. "You don't think he can understand you," she said, squinting at her mother. "But he does. He understands every word you say."

Over the next few days, Dawson had leaped off our deck and tore through the neighbor's yards, taken me for walks on which he yanked me down every squirrel scent we crossed, and chewed the strap off my favorite sandal.

On the eve of Dawson's Last Supper at the DeBoer household, according to the pre-nuptial arrangement, I came into the kitchen

in time to see my barbecue being dragged across the backyard, Dawson's teeth firmly clenched on the cover, his back arched in determination as he toppled it on its side. It came to rest in one of Karen's freshly planted flower beds.

I looked at Stephanie. "I think the dog's gotta go." She ran out of the room and somewhere off in the distance of the house I heard her door slam.

During Dawson's Last Supper at the DeBoer household — we had arranged a little trip to Orangeville the following afternoon — the dog hammered in the last nail to his own coffin. We caught him lifting his leg on the corner of the couch. Stephanie dove for him before he could do his business, but he drew three neat lines on the upholstery then swiped his paws on the carpet. Personal hygiene was important to him.

"That's it. He's going!" hissed Karen.

"Nooooooo," came the piercing shriek from the 13-year-old like she was falling off the roof. The three other kids joined in, and before we knew it, they were all sobbing. Dawson trotted over to me, and I sneaked him a French fry under the table.

"You're all going to hate me for the rest of your lives over this, aren't you?" Karen managed over the din.

There was no hesitation. "YES!" That from the 13-year-old, who, we find, really needs to express herself more clearly.

Then Karen made a mistake that haunts her to this day. Caught up in the emotion, she blurted out, "Okay, I'll let you get gerbils or hamsters or any other rodent you want."

At the time, it didn't help much, but just to give you some perspective on how much Karen hates any rodent in the mouse family — she'd rather stick a needle under her finger nail before she'd even look at a picture of a gerbil. Unfazed, the kids continued their crying while Dawson chomped on yet another French fry beside my chair.

Then came the phone call from Orangeville. Life has a funny way of sorting itself out. Dawson's owner had been found and wanted his dog back. The animal control officer was sorry. She knew what a great dog Dawson was. She'd try her best to find us another dog.

The next day, we loaded Dawson into the van and drove him to his new/old home. Dawson hopped out of our van and co-operatively walked into the

kennel his new/old owner had in the back of his truck. It turns out his real name was Bentley, which we all laughed about. He, of course, didn't look like a Bentley. Bentley was the name of a butler or a car not a dog. The whole scene had a TV quality to it — as if the end of the episode had arrived, the truth had been revealed about Dawson's real identity, and life would continue tomorrow morning as it always had.

We each said goodbye to him, and Dawson wagged his tail sadly as he looked through the bars at us. One by one, each of the kids hopped into our own van and began sobbing. Then we said goodbye to the new/old owner and drove off. Not even the promise of a Dairy Queen Blizzard could quell the kids' mourning.

They cried and cried. And we let them cry. Their grief was real and to be respected. In their minds, Dawson/Bentley had died. They should openly mourn.

"Can Dawson come to our house again?" said the four-year-old, which brought on a fresh chorus of sobs, and, I'll admit, brought tears to my eyes when she cried freely at the answer.

Karen, who in her wisdom judged Dawson's character the minute she laid her eyes on his hairy face, felt terrible. "What were we thinking?" she said, looking at me as if to say, "What were YOU thinking?" I reminded her it was she who invited the hairy uncle into our lives.

We knew we'd made a big parenting mistake. We weren't ready for a dog, and we raised the hopes of our kids by inviting one into our home for two weeks. Of course they'd be devastated. It was one of those parenting moments when nothing you say will be appropriate. So we said nothing and let them cry. When they stopped sometime that evening after we rented a movie and popped some popcorn, it was the eight-year-old who reminded Karen of her promise of gerbils. Karen, who was about to drop a handful of popcorn into her mouth, froze, then smiled in that defeated way parents smile when their kids let them know they have not forgotten a promise no matter how irrationally it was made.

Ebony and Ivory arrived today in their little cage with the spinning wheel and tunnels. They've already escaped once and led us on a safari under coffee tables and behind couches. But "the rats," as Karen has affectionately come to call them, are another story.

Opinion

Playing in our sandbox

Jack Van Meggelen

Child's play! The expression is often misused as if it's not important. But child's play is vital for becoming healthy adults. Sandboxes are vital for children to grow up, and theology is vital for God's children to grow in faith.

Bert Hielema had it right when he began to wonder about the ultimate destiny of his Jewish friend, but he lost some points when he wanted to see some eternal credit for the exemplary life of his friend. But then, I will probably lose points, too, as this story unfolds, and ... that's OK - after all we're just playing in the sandbox.

Like children in a sandbox, we fight and quibble to defend our own infinitely better game. "You can't make pies like that, you have to stir it the other way around, and you need more mud," is about the level of our deepest critical insights and personal profundity.

Splitting hairs

In our sandbox we split hairs about the superior quality of our pancakes compared to the whimsical grandeur of the other guy's sandcastle.

In our theology we pretend to know how, when and where God saves us for sure (because we're right!) and how precarious the others' chances of salvation are unless they learn to agree with us.

In our sandbox we are overjoyed and impressed when we make a beautiful mudpie. We receive praise for the quality of our products and believe at that moment that we made something meaningful if not edible.

In our theology we get so wrapped up in the correctness and infinite beauty of our own creations and carefully developed belief systems that we completely forget that salvation is not so much for us to figure out but for God to implement in his way. (By the way,

the yardstick for judging us, and yes, I mean all of humanity, is his unbounded endless Love; not whether we somehow might have been a good "mensch"; this is where Bert loses a few points, I think).

When God calls us home

In our sand box all games end and all fights and disputes terminate when mom calls the kids in for supper. Then the reality of the sand castles and mud pies stop being relevant and all feuds have ended while mom hands out the hotdogs and fruit punch. We all know at that moment that the mud pies were only a game, yet we took it seriously while we were playing.

When God calls us home to his banquet (either individually or together when Christ returns), all our seeing "through a glass, darkly" will end, and I expect that we'll be given a view as different from our current insights and accomplishments as mud pies are from a royal wedding feast.

In Holland after the Second World War a poet wrote a little poem in which a collaborator with the Nazis is nevertheless going to heaven. The poem ends like this:

"En niemand kan zeggen dit is een leugen, want niemand van ons heeft naast hem gestaan. Het hemelrijk is er voor hen die niet deugen, en voor zondaren is Christus opgestaan. en weest niet bevreesd als ge ooit na dit leven een mens die U haatte hierboven ontmoet. De boef en de burger zijn er om't even twee zondaren gerijngt door het zelfde bloed."

[And no one can say that this is a lie for none of us witnessed his final trial. Heaven is home for misfits and villains; it's for sinners Christ rose from the dead. But don't be afraid if, in eternity, you meet the one you hated on earth; for there the hoodlum and good guy are equals; two sinners,

cleansed by the same blood. My translation - JVM.]

My contribution to the discussion is as follows: We have gone wrong when we start to believe that we, or anyone else, are saved by our faith. We are saved by Grace, and that is a gift from God. We know of our salvation by faith. That, too, is a gift from God. That knowledge allows us to begin to enjoy the benefits of heaven and the new life in Christ already here and now. But we cannot conclude that those who have no faith now will therefore never be saved. The Bible makes it abundantly clear that God so loved "the world..."; and Abraham would be a "blessing for many nations", and to a "thousand generations" of those who love God.

Earning airmiles

We are at the most about 140 generations from Abraham, so

God's love still has a long time to run. Jesus teaches us on nearly every page of the Gospels that we must never underestimate the power and scope of the Father's love and his willingness to forgive the most horrid sinners; yet, we devise any and all means to try and come up with reasons why 'others' can't go to heaven, or, in Bert's view, why they somehow ought to earn "air miles" based on pedigree and/or lifestyle.

Now please don't make me out to be an "universalist" or so, because I'm not. All I want to propose is that 'our theology' is just that - our way of seeing things. We have a tremendous obligation to try and understand the will of God for our lives as revealed in Scripture, and we must also try to understand how God has worked his salvation plan since the Fall.

We must *not*, however, think that therefore we can decide who is

in and who is out.

Our obligation to study the Scriptures and witness to the truth of the gospel to the ends of the earth is not because we must save souls, but because we are called to witness to the glory of God's Name. As they say, there will be three surprises in heaven. The first one is all the people there I did not expect to see; the second is the people not there I thought would be; and the third surprise is that I am there myself.

So I have a question for Bert and all readers: "Have you ever in your life met a person who is NOT going to heaven, and how do you know?"

"Unless you become like one of these little ones..."

Jack Van Meggelen is a retired civil servant; armchair critic; and VBS teacher. He lives in Toronto and can be reached at jackvanm@ionsys.com or by a letter to the editor.

2002 Summer S.I.P. Newsletter

Dear Friends,

During this past year violent murders have increased from bi-weekly to almost daily occurrences, even four innocent members of one family in the town of Grimsby, Ontario. So has S.I.P.'s work of sharing God's unconditional love, healing, forgiveness and restoration with troubled, twisted and wrecked lives.

Some 200 plus inmate visits were made this past year in 3 provincial institutions and 1 federal institution in Kingston, as well as with several ex-offenders.

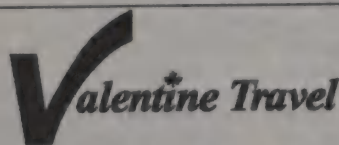
Also, a number of hours were spent in the community to prevent several potential murders and with other troubled people in various walks of life. I was also an invited guest for an evening with 10 caring Christian people in Beamsville, where I shared some basic insights into greater balance and wholeness gleaned from the experience of my own life.

I am also grateful to report that my serious bout with Hodgkin's disease is still in remission for some 10 years now. **Ten years of grace!** Further, I am happy to report that I have regained a fair measure of my energy as I am on dialysis now, due to a decade of slow deterioration of both of my kidneys as a result of the Hodgkin's disease. *Finally, I have just turned 73 years young and have no intention to ever retire from sharing the Good News with those that need it most!*

Again, we do wish to express our gratitude to the Lord and to all those who support S.I.P.'s work with their prayers, gifts and time to carry on Christ's work here on earth. *The kind of work with the troubled and lost that He, Himself spent most of His time with while on earth.* **The primary reason why He came!**

In His Service,

Casey VanderStelt
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News Comment

Nose for News



Bert Hielema

IT LOOKS TO ME THAT we are in for interesting times again — which is a Chinese curse, by the way. It seems that U.S.A. always needs an enemy: first it was the U.S.S.R., now fallen apart into numerous states.

After the disappearance of the Soviet threat, fortunately for the Pentagon people, the Al-Qaeda event happened, and so the War of Terrorism was as good an excuse as any to keep the military in business. After all, the U.S.A., as the world's proud supreme power, must somehow be able to show off its war machine and killing arsenal.

However, since the Afghanistan Affair has proven to be a dud, a new enemy must be found, and, hallelujah, there is Saddam Hussein. All of which makes for stimulating speculation and intriguing possibilities because the consequences of an Iraqi invasion are mind boggling with religious, economic — oil, of course — and political — Bush's job is on the line — implications.

FOR NOW, SECRETARY OF State Colin Powell, not really a true believer in sabre-rattling, is nevertheless making the rounds in his luxurious Boeing 747 to the world's capitals, drumming up support for the U.S.A.'s strategy, not making many converts, however. The rest of the world has great doubts about American leadership, evident not only in Europe, but also in South Korea and Japan — almost totally dependent on Middle East oil — and especially in China,

suspicious that the U.S.A. is becoming a permanent fixture in Central Asia, right next door.

SADDAM HUSSEIN HAS again discovered his Arab and Muslim roots, and, with a bit of luck, might make up with arch-enemy Iran — having fought a useless and bloody war with it for 10 years — while Saudi Arabia, from where the U.S.A. staged its Desert Storm war in 1991, has now refused to do the same this time and is accused of being an enemy of the U.S.A., benefiting Iraq, for, as the saying goes, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

The whole worldwide military machine is in a state of flux after last September 11, wondering whether its armed forces are capable of dealing with the shadowy threats of the future: suicide bombers, computer jamming, biochemical threats. Fighting terrorism is terribly difficult as we see every day in Israel.

That no other major terror attack has happened since Sept. 11 cannot be credited to supersmart intelligence. It's impossible to imagine that the FBI and the CIA have become efficient and effective overnight. Israel has the best secret service anywhere and look what's happening there. No, my bet is that the 9/11 massacre was a one shot affair. That, what's his name, Osama bin Laden, is now Somebody-Has-been Laden, dead and buried in an unmarked grave in Afghanistan. No longer a menace.

Farfetched? I have recent his-

tory to back me up. Just consider the U.S.S.R. in 1989: even just before it collapsed, the U.S.A. still saw it as a grave threat; yet it had completely decayed from within and no CIA had predicted its sudden breakdown. People believe what they want to believe, and pious and godfearing America wants to believe that it must rid the earth of evil, personified first in godless Communism and now in Islam.

All this is a classic example of seeing the speck — well, make it a plank, also — in Saddam's eye, but not the plank in our own. Of course, Saddam is a real monster, having gased and killed tens of thousands. However, his human rights record, while appalling, is no worse than those of other tyrants, such as Putin and Chechnya, China and the Falun Gong, Egypt and the Muslim Brotherhood, Israel and the Palestinians — where millions of children are now malnourished, says the UN — or Mugabe in Zimbabwe who singlehandedly worsened a pending famine. Most of these, incidentally, are U.S. allies.

A PLANK IN OUR EYES? Where? Well, we in the West have the plank of environmental exploitation with world-wide weather implications, causing floods and droughts, especially in the South; we have the plank of global capitalism, making the rich richer and the poor poorer; we have the plank of not sharing our wealth with the starving millions; we have the plank of high tariffs so that the poor cannot compete with the West; we have the plank of high domestic subsidies for farmers, depriving destitute countries of a level playing field. All that, this year alone, may kill millions worldwide.

Perhaps Hussein should be replaced, which America seems determined to do. It is quietly mobilizing National Guard and Reserve personnel, with the emphasis shifting from chemical and biological warfare — needed right after September 11 — to infantry, armor, engineer and combat medical units. According to U.S. Department of Defense sources, the Army is calling up full companies, battalions and brigades. Major units from the 28th, 35th and 40th Mechanized Infantry divisions, 29th Light Infantry Divisions and 49th Armored Division have been re-activated, now totaling close to 80,000.

Routine mobilizations of civilians are limited to nine months in duration, meaning that the clock is ticking for an attack in January or February next year, when weather conditions in Iraq are good for

air- and ground warfare. This will make it possible to discharge those who have survived, in March, when new units can take their place. By the way, the U.S.A. also ordered 16,000 body bags, just in case, because the Iraqi army is not the Taliban and the ethnic Kurds are no Northern Alliance.

FROM HERE, WHERE IS IT in rustic Tweed, it doesn't look a repeat of Desert Storm, with its massive 500,000 strong army. You know what I think? Bush is a secretive man, who loves to do the unexpected. Already far too much has been deliberately leaked. There is a distinct possibility that an attack might come sooner than later, perhaps even in a few months, something that nobody, least of all the target man, Saddam in Baghdad, suspects. It also gives him little time to prepare. Surprise is the most effective weapon in a war. Spreading false rumors and planting fake evidence and using deceptive means, are legitimate ruses of war.

Will Europe go along? What about Europe anyway? Is it still in bed with the U.S.A.?

No, the ties are frayed, at this point. I read a number of European newspapers and what I sense is that with the "axis of evil" speech by George W. Bush in his State of the Union address in January, Europe began to criticize the United States on a wide variety of fronts. There is now a long list of Continental complaints about American policy, centring on the Bush administration's refusal to honor the Kyoto Protocol on Global Warming, its failure to ratify the Rio Pact on biodiversity, its withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and the preoccupation with missile defense at the expense of continuing the Anti-Terrorist program initiated by the Clinton administration, which could have prevented the 9/11 tragedy.

Also Europeans are angered by the U.S. opposition to the ban on land mines, its treatment of Al-Qaeda prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, its opposition to new provisions of the biological warfare convention and most recently its negative response to the International Criminal Court. However, the most serious act of U.S. one-sided approach in European eyes concerns the Bush administration's announced intention to replace Saddam Hussein, if needed through a go-it-alone invasion.

According to Francis Fukuyama, of *The End of History* fame, now professor of International Political Economy in Washington,

there is a basic difference of approach between the two Western powers. Europe has a population of 375 million, compared to some 280 in the U.S.A. Europe, collectively has a \$10 trillion economy; the U.S. has \$7 trillion. Europe spends barely \$130 billion on defense, about a third of the \$340 billion U.S. military budget in 2003. That says it all.

Europe has seen two devastating wars in the 20th Century and now deliberately has shaped its policies away from national sovereignty to a Common European approach, to prevent such wars forever. America is of the opinion that the world has fundamentally become a more dangerous place and that Saddam is a threat to Western civilization as a whole. Many Europeans, by contrast, believe that the attacks of Sept. 11 were a one-of-a-kind event and that Saddam, if he had nuclear weapons, would not pass them on to terrorists.

Thus, an invasion of Iraq is not seen as necessary and that containment will continue to work as it has since the Gulf War. Europeans also believe that Muslims terrorists don't represent a threat to the West, but are focused on the United States as a result of American policy in the Middle East and the Gulf region.

WHERE DO I STAND? As a European born and Canadian citizen by choice, my sympathies lie with the Europeans. I also think that most Canadians feel that way. We are essentially different from the Americans in that respect. The U.S.A. is more 'religious' more nationalistic, which has, says historian Arnold Toynbee, neo-paganistic overtones. He writes: "But on the principle of looking at the beam in one's own eye as well as the mote in one's brother's eye, it is perhaps more useful to consider the effects of fanaticism upon our own form of man-worship... Nationalism.... Here are two rival religions: traditional Christianity and neo-paganism. They are irreconcilable with one another, and each is armed with the formidable force of a fanaticism derived from the Christian and the Jewish past."

So this whole affair of "America versus the world" is a religious dispute, after all: nationalism — neo-paganism — versus Jihad — neo-paganistic Islam. Two false religions battling each other.

Bert Hielema lives and ruminates in Tweed, Ont.

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Christian Courier is published on alternate Mondays. Copy deadline for each issue is 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, thirteen days prior to publication date.

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PHOTOS

There is a processing fee of \$25 for the inclusion of a photograph with a personal or family announcement. Photo space is not charged P.I., but we reserve the right to determine published photo size. Please note that we cannot use a faxed photo. We need either an original (which we will return) or a downloadable Internet image.

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Anniversaries



1947 October 21 2002
Arnhem, Neth. Strathroy, Ont.
It is with grateful hearts and much joy and thanksgiving to God we are pleased to announce as a family the celebration of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,
55th wedding anniversary.

ALBERT and ANNIE MOES
(nee Schipper)

Family:

Henry & Ali Moes - Hamilton, ON
Jerry & Jane VanArnhem - Delaware
John & Chris Moes - Kincardine, ON
Bart & Rhoda Wassing - Ingersoll, ON
Ron & Cathy Moes - N. Delta, BC
Rick & Chris Moes - White Rock, BC
17 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

"Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."
Psalm 37:4

We invite all those who wish to congratulate our parents on this remarkable achievement to an open house to be held on August 31st from 2-4 p.m. at the Senior's Complex, 400 Dominion St. Strathroy, Ontario.
Best wishes only please

1952 Wedding Verse 2002

"...the Lord will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore." Psalm 121:8

With praise and thanksgiving, we thank our Heavenly Father for blessing our parents.

WARNER and GRIETJE KOITER
(nee vanHuizen)

with 50 years of marriage.

Their children and grandchildren:
Klaas & Wilma Koiter - Midland
Laura, Ian, David

Trixie & Pieter Wonder - Hagersville
Sharon, Philip, Heather Renée
Rob & MaryAnn Koiter - Brantford
Daphne, Lisa, Tara, Rob, Nicholas
Nick & Sandra Koiter - Guelph
Mark, Brian, Alex, Renée, Debra
Dave & Aline Koiter - Hamilton
Jared and Lauren

invite you to celebrate this joyous occasion at an Open House on August 31, 2002, 2-4 p.m. at the Christian Reformed Church Hall, 150 Bruinsma Ave., Wallaceburg, Ontario.
May God bless you on this special day and in the years to come.

1951 September 23 2002
With thankfulness to the Lord for his great goodness, we hope to celebrate, the Lord willing, the

50th Wedding Anniversary
of our parents and grandparents
HENK and JOANNE POSTMA

We wish you the Lord's blessing in the days to come. With all our love,

Ted & Heidi Postma
Shalena & Greg Neven,
Cathenia, Steven, Ryan
Garry & Marietta Postma
Kerri and Adam Radsma,
Rachel and Erik Van Dyk (fiancé),
Heather, Renee
Gerry & Jackie DeJong
James, Brian, Jolene

Rick & Diane Postma
Colin, Kayla, Evan, Gareth, Shanelle
An open house will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2002, 2-4 p.m. at Calvin Christian School, West 5th Street, Hamilton. Best wishes only.
Home address: 166 Central Drive
Ancaster, Ontario L9G 2A4

1942 August 29 2002
Psalm 121:1-2

With joy and thanksgiving to God, we wish to announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents

JAKE and LENIE EIGENHUIS
(nee Van Manen)

Congratulations, Mom and Dad, Oma and Opa. We thank you for all your love and care, and your example of faithfulness. May the Lord continue to bless you with good health and happiness. With much love, from your family:

Marilyn & Pat Warren
Clayton, Leana
Bernie Eigenhuis & Alice
John & Ann Eigenhuis
Jeremy & Candice - Quinton
Shawna

Home address: 271 Tollendal Mill Rd
Eden Hall, Apt. 316 Barrie, ON
L4N 7S6



1952 September 19 2002
With thanks to God for His faithfulness, we are happy to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents

OSCAR and OBBIE DEELSTRA
(nee Piersma)

Psalm 23: "The Lord is my Shepherd" was your wedding text. God has richly blessed you and us with His goodness and mercy throughout the years, and it is our prayer that He will continue to hold you in His tender care.

Congratulations and love,
Doreen Deelstra - Sapporo, Japan
John & Louise Deelstra - Wyoming
Gratiana & Tim Wilkins - Alicia, Adam
Osanna, Loreen, Sacha, O. J.,
Nathaniel, Daniel, Andrew
Gerald & Shirley Deelstra - Wyoming
Emily, Benjamin, Abigail

An Open House will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2002, from 2-4 p.m. at the Wyoming Christian Reformed Church in Wyoming, Ontario. Best wishes only please.
Home address: 531 Ontario St., Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0

1952 September 13 2002
Thankful to God for His faithfulness we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our parents.

ANDY and HAMEY DEVRIES
(DeJong)

Anne & Mike Godfrey - Hamilton

Devan

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Cam, Kyle, Mark

Rose & Harvey Lootsma - Kincardine

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Brett, Luke, Hannah

Open House:

Sat. Sept. 14: 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Rehoboth CRC, Scugog Rd.

Bowmanville

JOHN & HILDA TAMMING

will celebrate their 40th anniversary on September 5th - We praise God for His faithfulness to our family through the years. May God continue to bless you both with health and joy for many more years. You are a blessing to your family and many others

Anita & Gordon - Jacob, Ari, Anna
Glenda & Bruce - Stephanie
Stephen & Cindy - Nicole, Meagan
Kevin & Melissa

Home Address: 55 John St.
Orangeville, ON L9W 2P6



Obituaries

January 25, 1925 July 22, 2002
Friesland Collingwood, Ont.

Psalm 121:1,2

"I lift up my eyes to the hills -
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth."

On July 22, 2002,

BEEN (BEN) REITSMA

passed from our arms to the arms of our Heavenly Father. He is lovingly remembered by wife Audrey (nee den Bok); son Doug Reitsma of Welland, his wife Marlene, and their children Tyler and Matthew; daughter Debbie Reitsma of Collingwood. He will also be remembered by his brother, sister and their families in the Netherlands, brothers and sister-in-laws and his many nieces and nephews in Canada. We thank God for the time we were able to spend with him, and the memories, which we will cherish in our hearts.

The funeral took place on July 25, 2002, at the Collingwood CRC, followed by the interment at the Presbyterian Cemetery on the Poplar side road.

THERESA ENGELINA FLEDDERUS
(nee Huisman)

On Saturday, August 10, 2002, the Lord in His mercy took to be with Himself. His child, Theresa. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her and were blessed by her.
Beloved wife of Ralph. Mother of Lyn & Steve Marfisi
Carolyn & Stephen Talkamp
Much loved Oma of Alyssa, Philip and Amelia Marfisi and Joshua and Samantha Talkamp
Loved sister of Agnes Puurveen, Nell Hagen, and Bert Huisman Pre-deceased by her sister Ria Kroezen, and her parents.

The funeral service was held on Tuesday, August 13, 2002 at the First Christian Reformed Church, Guelph, Ontario.
Correspondence: 21 Fairmeadow Dr., Guelph, ON, N1H 6X2




Church News

New Address:

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Church News	Event	Miscellaneous
<p>Call accepted: To Wilowdale CRC, Toronto, Ont. Pastor Martin Benckhuysen, formerly University Chaplain at Ann Arbor, MI. Address: 76 Chelmsford Ave Toronto, ON M2R 2W4 Installation service: Sept. 8, 10:30</p>	<p>Immanuel Christian School of Oshawa, Ontario hopes to celebrate its 40th Anniversary the weekend of October 18th, 19th and 20th. All former and present students, teachers, parents, and friends are invited to help us celebrate God's faithfulness. For more information contact Trudy Bouma at 905-623-1103 ph/fax, or e-mail: r.bouma@sympatico.ca</p>	<p>Share your thoughts on our forum at www.christiancourier.ca</p> 
<p>Volunteers Needed</p> <p>TAKE A NEW LOOK AT THE WORLD! YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING IS SEEKING IMMEDIATE HOST FAMILIES IN YOUR AREA TO HOST FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS, WHO ARE ARRIVING THIS MONTH FROM COLOMBIA, GERMANY, JAPAN, AND VENEZUELA. ANY SIZE FAMILY CAN HELP! OPEN YOUR HEART AND YOUR HOME TO A YFU EXCHANGE STUDENT.</p> <p>VOLUNTEER HOST FAMILIES PROVIDE ROOM, BOARD, LOVE, AND GUIDANCE. SHOW A STUDENT WHAT EVERYDAY LIFE IS LIKE IN CANADA. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE YFU HOST FAMILY PROGRAM CALL 1-800-TEENAGE (833-6243) OR CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.YFU.CA</p>	<p>Help to support Christian journalism! <i>Christian Courier</i> is a ministry of Reformed Faith Witness. All gifts of \$10 or more are tax-deductible and will receive an official receipt. Please make cheques payable to: Reformed Faith Witness, and send to: 4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p>	<p>Would 7% to 10% lifetime income appeal to you?</p> <p>Over 65?</p> <p>Charitable Gift Annuities can provide these rates, largely tax-free and ultimately benefit the charities of your choice.</p> <p>Please ask for a confidential, no obligation quotation.</p> <p>Link Charity Canada Inc. 45 Harriet St. Toronto ON M4L 2G1 Phone: 416-410-4244 Fax: 416-465-6367 www.linkcharity.ca info@linkcharity.ca</p>
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HURON CAMPUS MINISTRY OF WATERLOO

Classis Huron

The Waterloo Christian Reformed Church (Church in the Woods) is pleased to invite all Waterloo area students, both university and college and their parents and friends to a

STUDENT WELCOME SERVICE

Sunday, September 8, 2002 10:30am

After the service, information about Huron Campus Ministry, Grace Christian Fellowship (GCF) at the **UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO** and **WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY** will be presented and an excellent luncheon provided by the church.

Please contact Chaplain Graham E. Morbey at 1-519-886-1474 or 1-519-884-1970 ext. 2739 for further information and assistance.

Waterloo Christian Reformed Church is located at 209 Bearinger Road, Waterloo.



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Edmonton Campus

Minister: Tom Oosterhuis Office - 492-5327 Home 483-8153
toosterh@ualberta.ca New office: HUB 169 - as of September 9.

Up to that time, email or phone. Look for the welcome tent in front of St. Joseph's College for cold drinks, hot dogs and information about study groups, retreats, video evenings and help around the campus. Welcome Barbecue will take place at the home of Tom Oosterhuis, 13915 -91 Ave. on Wednesday, September 4, starting at 6:00 pm.

McMASTER UNIVERSITY

Hamilton, Ontario

We would like to welcome all new and returning students to McMaster University. Stop by for a coffee or check our website: www.mcmaster.ca/chaplain

Campus Minister, Dr. Michael Fallon 905-525-9140, ext. 24123 E-mail: fallonm@mcmaster.ca

www.mcmaster.ca/chaplain

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Graduate Christian Fellowship, small group Bible studies, close relations with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, parties, filmseries, retreats, even a little

"Wine Before Breakfast" - it's all happening at the CRC Campus Ministry to the University of Toronto.

Contact our chaplains, Brian Walsh and Geoff Wichert at 416-596-2439, check out the website

<http://chaplains.sa.utoronto.ca/crc/>, or come to our opening reception at our office at Wycliffe College (5 Hoskin Ave) on Thursday,

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN

ONTARIO

and FANSHAW COMMUNITY

COLLEGE:

London, Ontario

Campus Ministry Staff

Grace Miedema dmiedema@skynet.ca 519-425-4503

Michael Veenema mveenema@uwo.ca 519-438-1242

Check our website for student connections with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, the local CRC community, and events for International Students, Graduates, and Faculty.

Also, a **Welcome BBQ.**

www.uwo.ca/chaplain - click on "meet..." and "michael..."

BROCK UNIVERSITY

Going to Brock? Stop by and meet the CRC chaplain Peter Schuurman, his assistant Jake Snieder, or join up with a vibrant Christian student fellowship! If you need help in getting settled or want to be involved in the Christian community on campus, contact us through the information below. We have lots of activities and events to nurture and challenge your faith!

Peter Schuurman, CRC chaplain DeCew Residence 202 Ph: 905-688-5550 ext. 3134 pschuurm@brocku.ca

Your friends in faith and learning!

Classifieds

Miscellaneous

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Job Opportunities

Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church
 of Bowmanville, Ontario

is searching for a

New Church Developer

to spearhead the development and organization of a daughter
 church in our area.

If you have a Visioning Capacity and gifts in Outreach,
 we would love to hear from you. Please contact us:

Search Committee
 Rehoboth C.R. C.
 130 Scugog Street
 Bowmanville, Ontario L1C 3J6
 Fax: 905-623-8962
 E-Mail: rehoboth@durham.net

Zion Christian Reformed Church in
 Oshawa, Ontario, is seeking a part-
 time worship co-ordinator, 20-25
 hours per week. The position starts in
 Sep/Oct. 2002. For full details, con-
 tact Aileen at 905-436-3255 or email:
zioncra@planeteeer.com



The Living Word
 Sermons for reading services.
 Contact:

CRC
 R. Vander Ploeg, Secr./Treas.
 37 Brick Pond Lane
 Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1
 Phone: (519) 539-2117

Miscellaneous

discern.



INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES
 Christian Graduate Education
www.icscanada.edu



REDEEMER
 University College

Redeemer University College is entering a period of significant institutional growth and is in the early planning stages of launching an ambitious, exciting and dynamic expansion plan which will require major financial support. If you are interested in working with a professional development team to lead others to unprecedented fundraising accomplishments, then consider applying for the position of:

Campaign Director

The primary job task will involve developing, planning and executing a capital and major gift campaign. A relevant degree and 5 years of related experience, preferably in an educational environment is desirable. For more details, check out the job opportunities link on our website at www.redeemer.on.ca/openings.html.

Please direct inquiries to:

Human Resources Director
Redeemer University College
 777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4
 Tel: 905-648-2131 x4230

Applicants are encouraged to fax or email their application materials. Fax: 905-648-2134 Email: jvgeest@redeemer.on.ca

All serious replies are appreciated. However, only candidates invited for interviews will be contacted.

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR



English Radio:

FROM COAST TO COAST

Television:

Primary Focus

Back to God Hour

BRITISH COLUMBIA
 Burns Lake - CFLE 9:15 am 1400
 Osoyoos - CJOR 8:00 am 1490
 Penticton - CKOR 8:00 am 800
 Port Alberni - CJAV 7:00 pm 1240
 Prince George - CIRX 7:00 am 94.3
 Princeton - CHOR 8:00 am 1400
 Smithers - CFBV 9:15 am 1230
 Summerland - CHOR 8:00 am 1450
 Vernon - CJIB 9:30 pm 940

ALBERTA

Brooks - CIBQ 8:30 am 1340
 Ft. McMurray - CJOK 8:30 am 1230
 High River - CHRB 6:30 pm 1140
 Edmonton - CJCA 6:00 pm 930
 Westlock - CFOK 7:30 am 1370

SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan - CJSL 8:00 am 1280
 Weyburn - CFSL 8:00 am 1190

MANITOBA

Altona - CFAM 9:30 am 950
 Steinbach - CHSM 9:30 am 1250
 Winnipeg - CKJS 9:00 am 810

ONTARIO

Atikokan - CFAK 9:30 am 1240
 Chatham - CFCO 6:30 am 630
 Fort Frances - CFOB 9:30 am 640
 Guelph - CJOY 8:30 am 1460
 Hamilton - CHAM 7:30 am 820
 Kapuskasing - CKAP 7:00 am 580

London - CKSL 7:00 am 1410
 Newmarket - CKDX 9:00 am 88.5
 Oshawa - CKDO 8:00 am 1350
 Owen Sound - CFOS 7:00 am 560
 Pembroke - CHVR 10:00 am 96.7
 Sarnia - CHOK 7:30 am 1070
 Stratford - CJCS 8:45 am 1240
 Windsor - CKLW 7:30 am 800
 Wingham - CKNX 10:30 am 920

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John - CHSJ 9:00 am 94.1

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown - CFCY 7:00 am 630

NOVA SCOTIA

Bridgewater - CKBW 7:30 am 1000
 Digby - CKDY 6:00 am 1420
 Halifax - CFDR 8:30 am 780
 Liverpool - CKBW 7:30 am 94.5
 Kentville - CKEN 8:30 am 1490
 Middleton - CKAD 8:30 am 1350
 New Glasgow - CKEC 7:30 am 1320
 Shelburne - CKBW 7:30 am 93.1
 Sydney - CJCB 7:00 am 1270
 Weymouth - CKDY 8:30 am 103.1
 Windsor - CFAB 8:30 am 1450

KIDS CORNER RADIO

Drayton Valley AB - CIBW 8:30 am Sunday 92.9 FM
 Nordegg AB - CHBW 8:30 am Sunday 93.9 FM
 Rocky Mtn. House AB - CHBW 8:30 am Sunday 94.5 FM
 Prince Rupert BC - CJRN 10 am Saturday 100.7 FM



Our Address: 3475 Mainway PO Box 5070 Stn LCD1 Burlington ON L7R 3Y8

**To advertise your business or to place a
 family ad, just call our toll-free number:
 1-800-969-4838.**

Events/Advertising

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

- Aug 24 Clinton & District Christian School 40th year reunion. For info on events, call 519-482-7851.
- Sep 18 Classis Niagara meeting 4p.m. at Providence CRC, Beamsville, Ont. See this issue for details.
- Sep 20 Liberation Choir, Fall tour, 8 p.m. Second CRC, Brampton. See ad for details.
- Sep 21 Liberation Choir, Fall tour, 8 p.m. First CRC, London. See ad.
- Sep 28 Celebrating 50 years in ministry. Rev. W. Buursma at Strathroy east CRC. Ph: 519-245-0454
- Sep 29 Rev. Henry R. De Bolster will celebrate, D.V., his 40th anniversary in the ministry with a special worship service of thanksgiving and praise to be held at Mount Hamilton C.R.C. 9:30 a.m.
- Oct 5,6 Bethel CRC of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan 50th anniversary. Contact Betty Veltkamp, 302-510 th Av N. Saskatoon, SK S7K 2R2 or email: bveltkamp@sasktel.net
- Oct 5,6 Blyth CRC, Blyth, Ontario will celebrate its 40th anniversary. Breakfast & social Oct. 5, commemorative worship services, Oct. 6. See next issue for more info.
- Oct 18 Liberation Choir, Fall tour, 8 p.m. Our Lady Immaculate R. Cath. Church. Guelph. See ad.
- Oct 19 Liberation Choir, Fall tour, 8 p.m. Rehoboth United Ref. Church, Hamilton
- Oct 19 A Day of Encouragement and training for deacons, elders and other caregivers at Hamilton District Christian High School in Ancaster. Theme: "Go out in Joy!". Featuring 50 workshops including special sessions for elders and caregivers. Cost: \$45. Contact your deacons for a registration form, or Diaconal Ministries at 905-336-2920 or at www.diaconalministries.com.
- Oct 18,19,20 Immanuel Christian School, Oshawa, Ont. 40th Anniversary. For event info, contact Trudy Bouma at 905-623-1103 or email: r.bouma@sympatico.ca
- Oct 19,20 First CRC of Chilliwack B.C. 50th anniversary. For info & billeting: call Erna Maarhuis 604-794-7140 or e-mail: pjonda@telus.net
- Oct 26 CLAC 50th Anniversary Celebration. Dr. Calvin Seerveld keynote speaker, Hamilton District Christian High. For further information, call Pauline at 905-945-1500.
- Nov 1 Christian Festival Concert under the direction of Leendart Kooij in Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto \$28/\$21/\$16. Call 416-636-9779
- Nov 5 The Annual 2002 Church & the Law Seminar will be held on Tues., Nov. 5th, 2002 at Bramalea Baptist Church, Bramalea located in Greater Toronto. This year's theme is "Essential Legal Issues for Churches & Religious Charities". Registration forms are available at www.charitylaw.ca and the host, Carter & Associates at telephone: (519) 942-0001, Fax: (519) 942-0300 or email: seminars@charitylaw.ca.

The Campus Ministry Committee of Classis British Columbia North West, invites applications for a full time

Campus Minister

to establish and develop a new campus ministry at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) in Prince George, B.C.

UNBC is a relatively small university, which openly states it is committed to the spiritual development of students. This campus ministry position will be the first full time chaplain for the university geared to ministering to a diverse student population, faculty and staff, including members of the Christian Reformed Church. The unique nature of UNBC as a regional university allows it to be a strategic source of leadership to the entire region. The campus ministry is envisioned to become an integral part of the life and influence of the university.

We are looking for a Christian with a strong commitment to the Reformed faith;

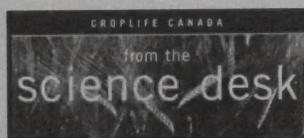
- Is self motivated and able to develop this new ministry,
- Has advanced academic and/or professional degrees,
- Has experience in working pastorally with youth and students,
- Is able to relate well to religious and ethnically diverse groups on campus,
- Able to nurture healthy relationships with volunteer campus ministry workers from other denominations and faiths

A job description is available upon request. Please send a letter of application, a complete resume, two reference letters, as well as a brief outline of a personal vision for campus ministry to:

Rev. Pieter Hendriks,
4714 Loen Avenue,
Terrace, B.C. V8G 1Z7

E-mail: pieterhendriks@telus.net

Dead line for applications to be considered is September 30, 2001



Q: Why should I use pesticides on my lawn or garden? What's wrong with a few weeds?

A: Through careful, planned use of lawn care products, proper mowing and water practices, healthy turf offers many benefits: increasing property values; preventing soil erosion; reducing allergens and the likelihood of insect bites and stings; controlling dust and pollen from weeds and grasses; absorbing pollutants from the air and reducing noise in busy urban centres to name a few. A well-kept 50' x 50' lawn creates enough oxygen to meet the needs of a family of four every day.

Q: What's the difference between pesticides and fertilizer?

A: Pesticides is a broad term for all chemical substances used to control insects, diseases, weeds, fungus and other "pests" on plants, fruits, vegetables and animals. Fungicides, herbicides, sanitizers, growth regulators, fumigants, and insecticides are all pesticides.

Pesticides are designed to attack particular pests without affecting beneficial or harmless insects or vegetation or microorganisms. Fertilizers help maintain the fertility of soil for the healthy growth of plants and crops.

THE LIBERATION CHOIR

Proudly presents the

FALL CONCERT TOUR

Under the direction of Willem Van Zuijdam
Accompanist: Ian Sadler
Soloist: Colleen Greidanus

Fri. Sept. 20, Second Christian Ref. Church
444 Steeles Ave. W. **Brampton**

Sat. Sept. 21, First Christian Ref. Church
507 Talbot St. **London**

Fri., Oct. 18, Our Lady Immaculate Roman Cath. Church
28 Norfolk St., **Guelph**

Sat. Oct. 19, Rehoboth United Ref. Church
77 Glancaster Rd., **Hamilton**

Sat. Nov. 16, Ebenezer Christian Ref. Church
18 Fourth Ave., **Trenton**

Concerts start at 8 p.m. For information, call Grace at 905-457-2348. Tickets \$10.00 available at the door.

Dordt College

Faculty Positions

Dordt College is seeking applications for openings beginning 2003-2004 in the following areas:

Criminal Justice

Develop and teach in an interdisciplinary criminal justice program. Qualified applicants should have a background in criminal justice, criminology, sociology, or related field.

Education (Two positions)

Teach introduction, upper-level (elementary and secondary methods), special education.

Spanish

Teach elementary, intermediate, and upper level courses in Spanish language, literature, and culture.

Social Work

Generalist; micro-practice background; methods courses and field practice.

Theology

General education courses in biblical theology and upper level biblical studies courses.

Evaluation of applications will continue until the positions are filled. To learn more about a position and receive application materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest and curriculum vita/resume to:

Dr. Rockne McCarthy Facsimile: 712 722-4496
Vice President for Academic Affairs E-mail:
Dordt College vpaa@dordt.edu
498 4th Ave. NE Web site:
Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697 www.dordt.edu/offices/acadaff

Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution that strongly encourages the applications of women, minorities, and disabled persons.



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News

Faith and science linked by Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation

Alan Doerksen

HAMILTON, Ont. — Some people think Christianity and science are mutually exclusive, and at odds with each other. But the Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation (CSCA) is working to help the Church and the scientific community understand the connections between faith and science.

"Our mission is really to investigate and integrate scientific information as it relates to biblical theology," explains Dr. David Humphreys, CSCA's executive director. Humphreys is also Emeritus Professor of Chemistry at McMaster University, in Hamilton, Ont.

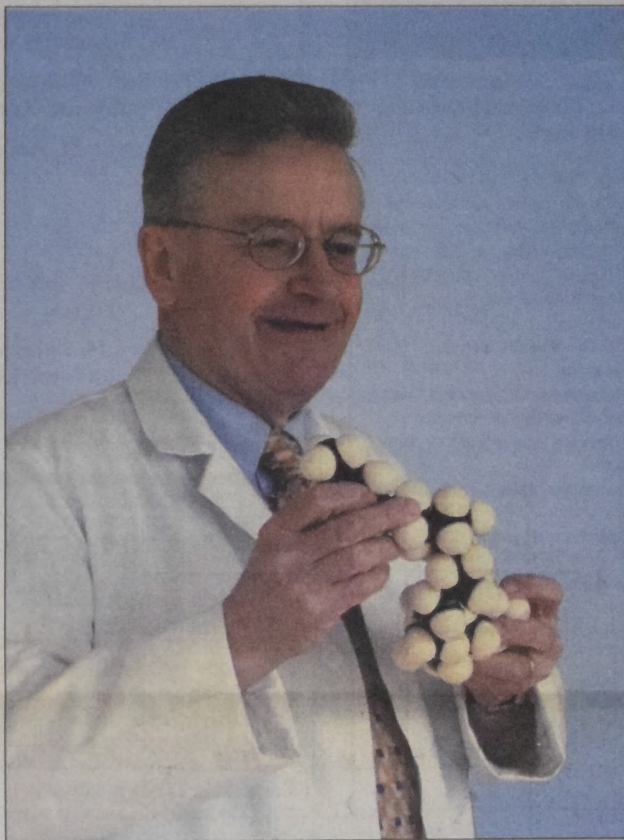
CSCA is a fellowship of scientists and those in related disciplines who share a common faith in Jesus Christ, the Word of God and a commitment to integrity in the practice of science. The stated purpose of the CSCA is "to investigate any area relating Christian faith and science" and "to make known the results of such investigations for comment and criticism by the Christian community and by the scientific community." The CSCA was founded in 1973 as a partner organization with the American Scientific Affiliation (which was started in 1941) and has grown significantly since that time, according to CSCA's website (www.csc.ca).

Well-known keynote speakers

CSCA runs a variety of projects and special events. Recently, CSCA has been running a lecture series, including well-known speakers such as Bill Phillips, who Humphreys describes as "a Nobel-winning scientist who's a Christian." Phillips spoke at a meeting in Waterloo, Ont., last November, as reported in the *Christian Courier*. Bill Dembski, an expert on Intelligent Design, was a CSCA guest speaker in Guelph, Hamilton and Toronto in March of this year.

Soon, Dr. Francis Collins, leader of the American government's Human Genome Project, will be speaking to CSCA members. Humphreys describes that program as "the most important project in science today," and notes that Collins is a committed Christian.

CSCA's members are scattered across Canada. But the agency's website offers an opportunity for discussions on diverse issues. "This is a new feature we're getting into — trying to overcome these



COURTESY DR. DAVID HUMPHREYS

Dr. David Humphreys, CSCA's executive director.

geographical barriers," says Humphreys.

CSCA also has commissions, which are special interest groups dealing with subjects such as bioethics, creation, global resources and environment. The commissions reflect "CSCA's commitment to take an in-depth look at a broader range of issues," says Humphreys.

Local sections of CSCA are organized to hold meetings and provide an interchange of ideas at the regional level.

Dealing with controversial issues

As an organization, the CSCA does not take a position when there is honest disagreement between Christians on an issue — such as evolution. "We are committed to providing an open forum where controversies can be discussed without fear of unjust condemnation," CSCA states on its website. "Legitimate differences of opinion among Christians who have studied both the Bible and science are freely expressed within the

affiliation in a context of Christian love and concern for truth."

Debatable shouldn't be divisive

"The debatable shouldn't be divisive," says Humphreys. He notes that Christians agree on many things, but "we quibble over one per cent." He explains that CSCA "would embrace Christians from a broader spectrum: theistic evolutionists to conservative evangelicals." But the agency challenges "naturalism — which says nature is all there is.... We should show how the big picture is supportive of an intelligent creator."

Nothing to fear in science

Some Christians see science and Christianity as being opposed to each other, says Humphreys. "One of our mandates is to help churches come to a better view of these things.... We need to help Christians understand there's nothing to be afraid of in science." With this in mind, CSCA sometimes provides speakers on scientific issues to churches.

CSCA members also write for various publications. The agency publishes a quarterly journal, together with ASA, called *Perspectives on Science & Christian Faith*, as well as a bimonthly newsletter.

It's important for Christians to be working in scientific research and teaching science at universities, stresses Humphreys. Although retired from McMaster, he teaches a course at McMaster Divinity College called *Frontiers of Science and Christianity*. He also has a website called scienceshorts.com — which investigates scientific mysteries for a popular audience.

Humphreys takes inspiration from Romans 1:20, which states: "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse" (NIV).

News Digest

Man gets trashed

THUNDER BAY, Ont. — A man in Thunder Bay escaped from a sticky situation this month, after he fell asleep in a dumpster, got crushed inside a garbage truck and was nearly hit by a bulldozer at a landfill.

Late one evening, the 37-year-old passed out in a waste bin behind a donut shop. A garbage truck emptied the bin a few hours later, tossing its contents into the truck's compactor, and dropping the man more than two metres. After picking up several more loads, the truck emptied its garbage at a landfill, and a bulldozer began breaking it up. Suddenly, the man wriggled out of the heap, narrowly avoiding the bulldozer.

"It gave everybody a shock," said equipment operator Wayne Olesthuk. "He could have been torn apart." But the man suffered only minor injuries, reports the *Globe and Mail*.

An Argentine line-up

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — Cash-strapped people in Argentina are making money by keeping places in queues. They can earn up to \$25 a time. Queues for banks and exchange bureaus are most lucrative.

Estado de SP newspaper reports an engineer who now queues at the Banco de la Nación in Buenos Aires said: "I need this money to pay for my electricity bill before it is cut off. I don't care if it is humiliating, I need the money."

Movie director Fernando Pino Solanas has been filming queues at the bank. He said: "With the stories of these people we can make a movie, but I never thought things would get this bad here." No doubt people will line up to see that movie.

Whale done

TORONTO — *Whale Done: The Power of Positive Relationships* is a new book which tells the fictionalized story of a gruff business manager who watches killer whales being trained at San Diego's Sea World and realizes he can apply the same techniques in his office and personal life. Co-author Ken Blanchard explains that "secondary reinforcers" — not primary reinforcers such as money or raw herring — are what spark outstanding behavior, reports the *Globe and Mail*. For whales, "it's scratching their tongue, rubbing their back, playing with them.... If people at work feel fully appreciated... after a while they'll stay in the job even for less money."

Christian Courier is online!

Christian Courier has just completed and launched its new website: www.christiancourier.ca Check it out!

